A QUARTERLY INCORPORATING CHRISTIAN NEWS-LETTER & WORLD DOMINION

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Frontier

EDITED BY JOHN LAWRENCE

The Bishop of Southwark
REPORT OF AN INTERVIEW

Bengt Sundkler
BANTU MESSIAH AND WHITE CHRIST

David L. Edwards
THE TWENTIETH CENTURY SICKNESS

I

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Frontier

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NEWS EDITOR : MARK GIBBS
LITERARY ADVISER : DAVID L. EDWARDS

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What is Frontier?

FRONTIER is a non-profit-making Christian venture.

It is the organ of the World Dominion Press and the Christian Frontier Council.

The Christian Frontier Council is a fellowship of thirty or forty laymen and women who hold responsible positions in secular life and have met regularly for the past sixteen years to explore with each other the practical implications of their faith. They include members of all denominations. From time to time the Council forms specialized groups to deal with subjects such as politics, medicine, or education. The Council does not seek publicity, but on appropriate occasions the substance of its discussions will be made known in this journal.

The World Dominion Press, founded in 1924, is the publishing branch of the Survey Application Trust. It exists to study and promote the growth of self-support, self-propagation, and self-government in the newer Christian churches of the world, and the survey of unevangelized areas and peoples. In pursuit of these aims it has published a comprehensive series of studies, both of regional situations and of the application of the teaching of the New Testament to the expansion of the Church in the modern world.

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

THE REV PIERRE BENIGNUS, of Nimes, has recently made a tour of the work of the *Société des Missions Evangéliques de Paris.*

THE REV ALAN BOOTH is the General Secretary of the Commission of the Churches on International Affairs.

F. J. BOLTON is an industrialist, and Secretary of the Edinburgh Frontier group.

THE REV STANLEY BOOTH-CLIBBORN is on the staff of the Christian Council of Kenya.

THE REV DR V. A. DEMANT is Regius Professor of Moral and Pastoral Theology, Oxford.

THE REV DAVID L. EDWARDS is the Editor of the SCM Press.

THE REV H. L. ELLISON, formerly a missionary with the Church Missions to Jews, is author of *The Christian Approach to Jews.*

DR H. S. D. GARVEN, formerly Professor and Dean of a missionary medical college in China: now Reader in the Institute of Physiology, University of Glasgow.

NANCY LAWRENCE is in the Department of Information, World Council of Churches, Geneva.

PHILIP MAIRET, was Editor of FRONTIER, 1950–52.

THE REV PAUL OESTREICHER is an Anglican priest who has been serving as assistant pastor in the parish church of Russelsheim, Germany.

M. MARCEL REGUILHEM is a collaborator of the French Protestant weekly *La Réforme.*

THE RIGHT REV MERVYN STOCKWOOD is the Bishop of Southwark.

DR JOHN SLEEMAN is Lecturer in Economics, University of Glasgow, and Secretary of the Glasgow Frontier group.

PROFESSOR B. G. M. SUNDKLER, of Uppsala University, is Principal of the Swedish Institute of Missionary Research.

M. M. THOMAS is a Director of the Christian Institute for the Study of Religion and Society.

THE RIGHT REV E. R. WICKHAM is the Bishop of Middleton.

BERYL WILLIAMS is headmistress of the County School for Girls, Reigate.

DR JOHN B. WYON is Field Director in India for the Harvard University School of Public Health.

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From the Editor

FOR all its misery and confusion this is a creative age and will be looked back on as a great age. We ought to praise God for this rather than complain of anything that may be lost. The twentieth century is great in its scientists, bold in the arts and resourceful in social adaptation; perhaps it is greatest of all in religious thinking. I do not mean by this that the great theologians of the twentieth century are greater than their predecessors, but that this is an age in which the Holy Spirit is opening our eyes to new things. That which was from the beginning and that which is today, this world and the next, the Christian faith and the other faiths by which men live, all these are being shown to us in a new light and in a different relation to each other. The significance of what happens in one's own age can only be discerned if it is regarded in a long perspective. I find myself coming to see the history of Christianity as a very slow decline (interrupted by some striking partial recoveries) from the fourth century down to a date which is hard to determine, but is not very far behind us. The spiritual revivals of the Reformation and of the Counter Reformation had both spent their visible force by about 1700, though subsequent events were to show that seed was germinating in secret.

The evangelical revival and the birth of the modern missionary movement were, on this understanding, the first signs that the tide had turned. It will be objected that the history of Christendom since then does not look altogether like a time of advance. Yet surely, God has been preparing great things; and in this generation we can begin to descry their outline. It is difficult to be more precise because this is not an age in which we can see these things in their finished form. This is an age in which a spiritual break through is being prepared. I believe that 'worldly holiness' will be at the centre of the revived faith, but we have as yet no more than hints of what is to come. That is hardly surprising. The spiritual purpose of the Babylonian captivity was not at first understood by the Jews.

What is creative in the twentieth century is, as ever, closely related to what is most miserable. To take an obvious example, the reason why we seek peace so earnestly is that we are not at peace, in ourselves, between races, between ideologies. It is a sobering thought that the '50s have been the best of the century so far. The Edwardian decade may have been better for some of us, but that cannot be weighed against the

misery of others. Ten years ago we were still weighed down by the destruction of the world war and the cold war was already at its height. Today the cold war is slowly thawing and the damage and dislocation of the second world war is nearly made good. Ten years ago it looked as if Europe might be in a decline but today European vitality is as great as ever, though, God be praised for it, Western vitality is no longer unchallenged by the vitality of other regions. Europe's relative weight is less in a larger world, but she herself has not ceased to develop. The task of the next decade is to level up, to get rid of the patches of material misery that still remain even in the most advanced countries and to help the efforts of less fortunate countries to raise themselves.

Thirty years ago the plans of realistic idealists concentrated on material aims. The spirit of the age seemed to be saying: 'Feed thy brother first, clothe him, house him, give him work and educate his children. No doubt he will have other needs after that but put first things first and do not be deflected from attending to material needs.' It is now easy to see that this was not so realistic as it seemed at the time. Material misery and spiritual emptiness are not altogether disconnected. It is dangerous to try to relieve one while ignoring the other. You cannot expect to save people's souls of you remain indifferent to whether they live in slums, and it may not be much use to remove them from slums, if in doing this you break up their existing pattern of family and social life without putting anything equivalent in its place.

No organization can in itself solve any problems, but some forms of organization conduce to red tape and other forms conduce to humanity. We need to look at the present articulation of society more closely than we have done. Wherever big industrial cities have grown whether under capitalism or communism, in Christian countries whether Protestant or Catholic, or in countries of other religions in Asia or Africa, the industrial proletariat, by and large, lose their existing religion without acquiring anything to take its place. The basic reason for this is that in the great cities of the modern world the parish is replaced by an urban antheap. In a village everyone knows everyone, everyone depends on everyone and everyone knows his place. The result may be happy or unhappy; in either case it conduces to a feeling of community, and without that neither the Christian religion nor any other religion can flourish. This is borne out by the present vitality of organized religion in North America where indeed some observers would say that the churches have developed their community aspect at the expense of other things. Even if this criticism is true, this aspect does not lose its

importance. The greatest handicap of the Russian Orthodox Church in the big cities of the Soviet Union is that it is still scarcely possible for the Church to have any activity as a community outside the church walls.

There is little doubt about the fact that the great cities of the industrial revolution provide poor soil for religion, but my explanation may well be contested. I am fairly sure that there is some truth in it, but no-one can tell without investigation what other factors are at work. It is urgently necessary to investigate the social factors which help or hinder the effective spread of the Gospel. This is a task for professional sociologists. Some of them are eager to undertake the task but get very little encouragement from the churches in Great Britain. On the Continent and across the Atlantic more has been done and even in this country the Roman Catholics are ahead of the other churches.

Research is indeed urgent, but practical experiment need not wait for research. The Church ought to show the world what it means to be a member of a body 'and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God' (Eph. iii: 9). What does this mean in practical terms? It involves, among other things, that the Church should be properly articulated in a way that no church is at present. The principle of the articulation of any society, in the sense in which I am using the term, is that everyone should be conscious of belonging to a group that is not too large for all the members to know each other in a real sense; the leaders of each group would represent their group in a wider association of groups which would itself be small enough for the leaders to know each other; each such association would be joined through its leaders in a still wider grouping, and so on through as many stages as may be necessary. The widest grouping of all could consist of whatever grouping of national and regional churches within the universal Church exhibits this principle of articulation on a world wide scale.

In what I have just written I have tried to avoid using the vocabulary of any existing church, because all the words that are already in ecclesiastical use are charged with emotion and prejudice. What I say applies equally to an Episcopal Church, a Presbyterian Church or to a church in the Independent tradition. In each case it would mean a thorough overhaul of structure, but it involves nothing incompatible with the theological principles of any church, from the Church of Rome to the Plymouth Brethren. The Presbyterian churches, with their Kirk Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods and Assemblies incorporate in a formal sense more of what I have in mind than any other group of

churches known to me, but even they seem to have gone wrong by regarding their ascending tiers of 'church courts' as pieces of machinery for the government of the Church rather than as a necessary expression of the fellowship of the members of the Body in an increasingly complex society. It is more important that each group should be joined in prayer than that it should meet for deliberation, though that also is required.

If what I say were to be taken seriously it would involve some kind of subordinate articulation of the larger Anglican dioceses, such as the Presbyterian system obtains through the Presbyteries; if the existing 'deaneries' could be animated, that would meet the case. All churches would have to find some way of articulating large parishes into smaller units. Various existing experiments would have to be examined in this connection, including, *inter alia*, the Methodist class system, the 'house church', 'street wardens', the Presbyterian eldership. The Presbyterian eldership would meet the case if those who are together under one elder came to regard themselves as the primary spiritual grouping of the universal Christian fellowship. If it be held that the territorial parish system should now be superseded, the problem remains but it becomes more complicated.

There may be a thousand ways of embodying these principles, and I have no particular preferences in that matter, but, as things are, the Church is too often conformed to the world. The Church ought not to reproduce those aspects of mass society which make it like an antheap. If she continues to do so she will continue to lose members as more and more men and women join the modern industrial society. In 1960 professing Christians are a smaller proportion of the world's population than they were in 1900. The 'younger Churches' have indeed grown but they are not growing so fast as the population of their countries. We know indeed 'the greatness of our fault', let us take heed to it.

What Has Happened to the Left?

I believe that the dialectic nature of society is part of God's ordering of the world and that no society is healthy unless it expresses the dialectic principle. In the modern world this principle is best expressed through the democratic party system of politics in its various forms. It is therefore a serious thing, even for its opponents, if a great political party loses its vitality. Yet I have found it hard to give my attention to the recent debates within the Labour Party and found myself wondering whether they had touched fundamental realities.

'Progressive' parties flourish when there are clear cut 'progressive causes' for them to advocate, such as were the abolition of slavery, the extension of the franchise, and the nationalization of the key industries. But in Great Britain the franchise is now universal and nationalization is no longer a clear cut issue. There may be a case for an extension of public ownership of industry but the issue is not a clear one and it is not a central issue for most electors. There are still progressive causes, notably in questions of race relations and colonial policies and in relation to the development of those countries which are less materially advanced than ourselves. These causes still capture enthusiasm but they are not simple, in the way that the widening of the franchise in this country was, or at least was presented as, a simple issue. For one thing, the territories in question are so different from each other that to advocate one policy for all of them would not even be plausible. Moreover, no party has a monopoly of 'progressive' action. Since the war Conservative Governments have sometimes done strikingly 'progressive' things, and Labour Governments have sometimes done surprisingly conservative things. Nowadays 'progressive' causes depend less than they did upon the party that sponsors them getting into power, they go forward through infiltration into all the parties, through infiltration into the Civil Service, the academic world, the armed forces and business. It may be that eventually the Rhodesian Selection Trust will be seen to have done more than political parties and more than the churches for the advancement of Africans in Central Africa. Business did more than the Church to get the schools reopened at Little Rock. So it would not be surprising if some of the men and women who would otherwise be fighting 'progressive' battles in politics have gone into business or the public service and are quietly fighting the same battle though with different weapons.

Unity

It is increasingly realized that the question of Christian unity is wider than the World Council of Churches, let alone the Churches which went through the Reformation and form the bulk of the membership of the World Council. But this extension of vision is not painless.

In many places a new spirit of charity and a wish to understand each other are growing between conservative evangelicals and those evangelicals who would call themselves followers of 'post-critical Biblical theology'. This rapprochement between different schools of evangeli-

cals is not yet matched by a willingness of conservative evangelicals to make contact with Catholics (whether of the Roman, Anglo-Catholic or Eastern Orthodox variety). Time has been when 'Catholics' in this sense seemed to be acting on the principle: '. . . come out from among them, and be ye separate . . .' (2 Cor. vi: 17), but many of them are now more ready to perceive what they may have to learn from evangelicals of the conservative tradition than those evangelicals are to consider what they might have to learn from 'catholics'.

This does not apply to Pentecostal Christians who sometimes find it easier to reach common ground with High Church Anglicans than with traditional evangelicals. I know full well the complaints that are made by most of my friends against the Pentecostals and against certain other extreme evangelicals. I suspect that these complaints are often justified, but the rest of us seldom wait to ask whether we on our side have wronged these brethren. The Pentecostals would say that it is we who drove them out of our churches.

One of the greatest injuries we do to each other in the Church is to entertain suspicions. This can be illustrated from the opposite end of the ecclesiastical spectrum. At the meeting of the Central Committee of the World Council of Churches at Rhodes last summer the presence of a few Roman Catholic priests in their capacity as journalists led to some strange misunderstandings. Knowing the personalities in question I find it absurd to think that they were engaged in a plot to set the Orthodox against the Protestants in the World Council of Churches. Knowing the Orthodox I think it absurd to suppose that the Roman Church would find it easy to allay their deep suspicion of Rome and bring them into a sort of united front against Protestantism. The Protestants who entertained these suspicions would never have done so if they had understood that the Eastern Orthodox position is one of immense solidity and fundamentally different from the Roman position. The fault of the Vatican was not that it played a double game, but that its organization for dealing with ecumenical matters was shown to be ludicrously inadequate. The Vatican radio is sometimes irresponsible in the things that it says about Eastern Europe and about other churches. I trust that it is more responsible about other matters but I have no knowledge of that. The contradictory things said by the Vatican about the Rhodes incident were bound to feed Protestant and Orthodox suspicions and have come near to bringing some of the good intentions of John XXIII to nought. The Vatican ought to take its own radio station more seriously and to establish proper machinery for dealing

with ecumenical relations. In the meantime it must not be surprised if it is misunderstood. On the other hand, Protestant critics of Rome should understand that the Vatican is not such an efficient organization as it is often supposed to be and they should realize the extraordinary variety of churchmanship to be found in the Church of Rome. Contradictions are more likely to flow from complexities and even clashes within the Roman church than from duplicity.

It is a year since I was in Rome. Pope John XXIII is a great man and a great Christian, who perceives things that his predecessors for a very long time do not seem to have seen. Unfortunately his judgment of people seems to be erratic and he does not always put into the key posts men with a vision as wide as his own. The General Council of the Roman Church which he has called cannot conceivably achieve a union of churches but it could be the beginning of a reform of the Roman Church which could pave the way for eventual reunion. I cannot understand those Christians who refuse to pray for this Council. Even if the Roman Church still needs reform as much as it did 400 years ago—I ask my Roman friends to forgive the supposition—can we doubt that God can raise up men to reform whatever may need reformation? It depends on the rest of us as well as on the Roman Church whether the Council begins necessary reforms or whether it widens the gap between us. It is therefore important that there should be contacts with Rome during the gestation of the Council. Protestant suspicion and Roman maladroitness have made direct contacts between Rome and Geneva more difficult for the time being. Contacts between the Church of Rome and other Churches on a church to church basis can continue, and that is the most important thing at the present stage.

Germany

Anti-semitism and open manifestations of depraved nationalism are a reminder that the future of Germany is still an unsolved problem. The Germans are a problem people, as the Russians are a problem people, even if they have nothing else in common but their greatness. Both are great peoples in every sense of the word, yet both have a fearful tendency to take the wrong turning. Books are written to explain this—I have written one myself—but this capacity to 'go wrong' even beyond what is normal in other nations, remains mysterious. The Russians have long accepted that the greater part of their problem is within themselves, but until recently the Germans seemed unanimous in looking for the

root of their troubles in external causes; they did not have 'a place in the sun' or they had been 'stabbed in the back'. Now for the first time one meets a few Germans who say that their people are a problem to themselves. Fifteen years ago it hardly seemed that anything healthy could come out of Germany for at least a generation. Yet since then the Germans have shown signs of national renewal and have given the Church some of the most remarkable movements of the century. There are still morbid fibres in the nation but there are also healthy fibres, and we forget too easily that if we had consistently encouraged what is sound in Germany some at least of our present calamities might not have happened. I content myself with one example. It was the sixth year of war that came near to ruining European civilization. If we had not insisted on unconditional surrender; if we had been ready to come to terms with the Germany of Rommel and Bonhoeffer, that sixth year might have been a year of peace. The sound elements in Germany are stronger now than in 1944, but they and we are not out of danger.

Starvation in Our Time?

On another page we publish an article by Dr John Wyon on the controversial subject of population. Dr Wyon's argument is based on the premise that an unchecked expansion of population must eventually lead to starvation, and it is likely that this will be sooner rather than later. He does not prejudge the question of what methods of limitation are acceptable, but he points to what is happening and pleads for research into causes. It is not, in his view, a choice between more goods and lower birth-rate, but rather we need both 'bigger supplies better distributed', *and* some reduction of the present rate of growth of population. Possible means of achieving this range from sexual abstinence to infanticide. The argument is about what means are permissible. In Japan there are more abortions than live births. What alternative do we propose?

It is true there would now and for at least some decades be enough food for all, if every Indian and African peasant reached Danish standards of efficient farming, if British and American farmers were prepared to work harder to produce a surplus of food for free distribution to those in need, if some arrangement could be made for very cheap transport to hungry lands, and if people in hungry lands could migrate freely to lands of plenty. Merely to list these things shows how hard they will be to achieve, but it does not excuse us from trying to do at least some of them. J.W.L.

The Bishop of Southwark

INTERVIEWED BY MARK GIBBS

Mr Gibbs. First of all, Sir, I would like to ask you something about your 'inner ring' churches—the area immediately south of the river.

Bishop of Southwark. Walworth and Bermondsey, for example?

G. Yes. What would you think were the urgent needs of the Church in that area?

S. Most of these churches are fairly typical of churches in industrial areas—for instance, Sheffield or Birmingham—where the Church appears never to have had much of a following. We sometimes get parishes of 7,000, 8,000, 9,000 and 10,000 and congregations of between 40 and 50.

G. So this is really a mission area?

S. Yes.

G. Is that why you have made a special appeal for younger clergy to come in?

S. There are several reasons for making an appeal for the younger clergy to come in. Whether it is a mission area or not the churches have got to be staffed. Indeed I am not altogether happy about the term 'mission area' because even in the more prosperous parts of the diocese like Cheam and Kingston the Church has got a great task to make itself accepted by the people.

G. Some people have been asking what has happened to the young ordinands who have been produced by the religious revival in Oxford and Cambridge. . . .

S. I couldn't answer that one. You would need a most careful survey.

G. Are most of them going to the better areas, or are they keen on industrial areas?

S. I couldn't say. I have had quite a few older priests volunteering for livings, but what I am chiefly out for is curates to assist over-worked vicars. It is not a need peculiar to Southwark. Birmingham, Sheffield and Manchester have the same problem—there are many reasons why they don't come forward. Quite often there aren't any curates' houses. You can imagine in the Walworth area, for instance, this is very difficult.

G. Is there any real reason why they shouldn't live in the houses their parishioners are living in?

S. If you can find them. With Council houses it is a question of taking your turn in the queue. It is a very real problem. Another problem is that married clergy when they have a family tend to want to bring up their family in better-class areas.

G. Is there any reason why priests at home should expect that any more than priests in the missions overseas? Isn't this a case of 'keeping up with the Joneses'?

S. It is dangerous to generalize. The children of clergy who work overseas are left in this country and taken care of by grandparents or in-laws, or when they get to a certain age they are sent over here to school.

G. Lay people in the district have to

send their children to the local schools. Is there any real reason why priests shouldn't do the same?

S. It all depends how you define 'real reasons'. Reasons are advanced which are real to the people who advance them. Whether they are justifiable is another matter.

G. Let's consider the question of laity in the diocese. Are any of the more active Christian laity in London offering to help?

S. I think it would be true to say that for a good many years, long before I came here, certain parishes in the more prosperous parts of the diocese were helping parishes in the less fortunate parts. I am doing all I can to stimulate that. Here is one instance. One church at Bletchingley is associated with St Paul's, Lorimore Square. They assist in staffing parish organizations and in visiting and in maintaining the life of the church. What is more, it has developed into a two-way traffic. Now the people from Lorimore Square are going down to Bletchingley and taking part in the life there. At another church, in Southwark, where a new incumbent has taken over and the church life is at a low ebb, forty young people from another area have volunteered to offer themselves for six months to this new parson for anything he wants. Another offer came yesterday from Wimbledon to help a church in Camberwell. This is most encouraging, and it needs very much to be stimulated because it *is* doubtful whether the rank and file members of the congreagations in the more prosperous areas are fully aware of their responsibility towards the Church in the mission areas. I am impressed, as I go around, by these churches in the inner ring. You have a little band of people and very small congregations, and their devotion to the church and readiness to take part in social work and in running clubs and in youth work is often beyond praise.

G. What would you say about the style of this work? Does it give an impression of a fresh and smart attitude to life, or is it really a little faded—although devoted?

S. They lack the financial resources.

G. I don't mean financial . . .

S. . . . and equipment. I remember my time in Bristol when I compared some of the church clubs with the Youth Centres. The Church couldn't begin to compete in the way of resources, but the Church Clubs tended to be very much more popular.

G. Have they fresh paint and smart notice boards?

S. I couldn't say.

G. Obviously you would wish your people not only to work in church groups but also do something in the district?

S. The more ordinary secular organizations into which they can get the better.

G. Do you find many Christian Trade Unionists—are they noticeable in this area or not?

S. I visited the other day a very keen man who plays an active part in Trade Unionism. This again is something I am seeking to stimulate.

G. Is he backed by the local church?

S. Most certainly: it was the parson who told me about him in the first instance and brought me into contact with him.

G. Now, Sir, about the suburbs—what are their main needs?

S. A greater awareness of both world needs—e.g. refugees, war on want, problems in Africa, colour bar—and also a greater awareness of social needs over here—for instance, the coloured population in the diocese of Southwark, which in places like Brixton is appreciable.

G. Would you say that the trouble with the suburbs is that the Christians try to keep up with the Joneses as much as anyone else?

S. This is characteristic of human nature. I found it in a working class parish too. You have got to keep up with the neighbours. It interested me when television first came in—in my working-class parish you could be certain if it appeared in one house it appeared either side pretty quickly.

G. Would you agree that this is one thing to watch very carefully?

S. Yes. I am not making any criticism. All I am saying is that it exists in human nature. It is one reason why the Labour Party is having great difficulty at the present moment in getting its propaganda over. You have a situation today where many people, who would have been known formerly as working people, dislike being called working-class because they think it is a term not flattering to them. They prefer to think of themselves as middle class or just one class. It is so easy to make superficial generalizations about these things. There is something about 'keeping up with the Joneses' which could be quite a good and justifiable thing. For instance, the way I have seen it happen in my working-class parish is this. You have a house in the street where the parents would be concerned about the educational upbringing of the children and would make the child do his homework instead of roaming the streets. The people next door would copy. Now in 'keeping up with the Joneses' it may be that because Mr and Mrs A. have taken this line with their child, Mr and Mrs B., who never thought about it before, become aware of the value of taking education seriously.

Another instance: the Church being a middle-class institution, it is said that working-class people coming into the

Church feel themselves alien. If they do join, the Church makes them something other than they originally were. That again is a generalization. Supposing a boy turns up at church in Teddy Boy clothes (which I have seen in my own church and I don't mind it in the least) the tendency would be that he becomes a little less flashy. Is that necessarily a bad thing? If one is living in a Christian parish, it ought to have a mellowing and educational effect upon one.

G. You have churches in your diocese which would in fact bring these people into a real fellowship, and mellow them, and would not be affronted by their coming?

S. Yes. Many of the churches would be only too delighted to welcome them, and do welcome them. The difficulty is to get them. It is not merely the Church which fails to get them, but the secular Youth Clubs, the WEA activities, and

so on, which have a very small response. It is always being said the the Church fails with youth. It ought to be worded differently. The young people in those areas do not appear to want to be identified with *any* youth organization, ecclesiastical or secular. People who criticize the Church would do very much better to go into the deeper question of why it is that young people don't want to join anything.

G. I am still a little bit worried about this tendency for the Christians to do better in life than others, and then to move out. Priests often are reluctant to bring their families in. Doctors and teachers move out.

S. I think that they, just like the ordained minister, have got to realize that this is a missionary call, and it may be right for them to respond to it. What matters is the realization that *it may be God's will that you should stay where you are for the sake of the Church.* I hear wherever I go that people are so much on the move. One church got through five churchwardens in two years. The people who were showing signs of leadership—they are the ones who want to move out. Coupled with that is a fact of human nature you have got to recognize—a man likes to have something he can call his own—his own little house in which he can potter around rather than stay indefinitely in some Council house or flat which he feels isn't his. If a man has an alternative to living in the smoke and filth, he would say: 'For the sake of my family I am going to move out.' It would only be a great inward urge which would keep him.

Encounter with other Faiths

In this issue of FRONTIER we publish an article on 'Synagogue and Church'. In the next issue there will be an article by A. H. Hourani on 'Christians and Muslims'.

FRONTIER

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BENGT SUNDKLER

Bantu Messiah and White Christ

'THERE is one thing we sometimes wonder about,' he said, and hurriedly pulled his brown knitted hat down over his wrinkled forehead. The speaker was Theophilus M., a Zulu journalist, and editor of an African newspaper, an intense thirty-year-old African intellectual, intelligent, quick-witted and with wide contacts among present-day Africans. 'We wonder sometimes,' he repeated thoughtfully, 'whether we might not have got the wrong God. It might have been better if we had had our own God.'

I thought for a moment about the Christian name which he had been given in Holy Baptism—for he was a Christian and, in common with the entire modern generation of African intellectuals the continent over, had been to the mission school. It was not a Bantu name, but a foreign name, a Greek name, Theophilus—'Loved by God'. Yes, but loved by which god? Could it be the white man's God, when the chasm between white and black was yawning wider and wider with every passing day, in an *apartheid*-ruled South Africa?

He took me with him to the Africans' own church, a cold and draughty little shack—this was in June, winter in Johannesburg. A layman was preaching and quoted Matt. xxv: 1–3. 'So shall it be with the Kingdom of Heaven, as when ten virgins took their lamps and went out to meet the bridegroom. But five were white and five were black. The whites took their lamps with them, but forgot to take any oil. But the blacks took oil with them in their vessel. . . . At last they came and shouted, "Lord, open the door for us!" But he answered and said, "Verily, I say unto you, I know you not!" '

Who stands at the Gate?

In attempting to deal with the question of the African separatist churches, we must remember that the situation is both fluid and dramatic—a fact which was brought home to me every day in the field. We are dealing with things of the Spirit, which 'bloweth where it listeth', transcending and breaking through any wall of doctrine or

organization. In a study of 1948 (*Bantu Prophets in South Africa*, Lutterworth Press, London, 1948), I suggested a twofold classification of the African independent churches: Ethiopian and Zionist, defined as follows.

Ethiopian: These were (a) such Independent Bantu churches as have seceded from white mission churches, chiefly on racial grounds; (b) other Bantu churches seceding from leaders classified under (a). Their church organization and Bible interpretation are largely copied from the Protestant churches from which they seceded.

Zionist: A syncretistic Bantu movement, with healing, speaking with tongues, purification rites and taboos as the main expressions of their faith.

This simple classification has been generally accepted. I feel, however, that with the new material I have gathered one important modification must be made; we shall only understand the real theological and ideological significance, both of the Zionists and of the prophet Shembe and certain others, if we distinguish three, and not two, main types: (a) *Ethiopians*, (b) *Zionists*, (c) *Messianic movements.*

The distinction between the second and third groups has not been culled from theological text-books; it is implied in a question of the utmost theological significance for the faithful in both camps: '*Who stands at the Gate?*' (*esangweni*). Is it the Jesus Christ of the Scriptures, or is it the Bantu Messiah in the person of Shembe, Khambule, Lekganyane, John Masowe or some other prophet?

The concept of the Gate of Heaven is one of the most vital of the ideas current in these independent churches. The Gate—or Gates? How many are there? Revelation xxi speaks of twelve gates to the New Jerusalem. An African prophet has had a dream which helps him to harmonize the heavenly vision of the Book of Revelation with the factual, down-to-earth reality of the South African race situation. He speaks about *thirteen* gates: twelve for the tribes of Israel, which, he believes, must surely refer to the Whites, and the thirteenth 'for Natives only'.

Another prophet mentions three gates: those of Meshach, Shadrach and Abednego. Meshach 'for Whites only', Shadrach for Africans and Abednego for Indians.

Others speak of only one gate. The decisive fact here is to know the name of the one who stands at the Gate, since he is the one who has the final authority to open or close it. He is the Mediator, the Gate-keeper of the *Kraal* of Heaven. In a Bantu royal *kraal* it is not permitted to approach the king direct; first, approach must be made to the door-

keeper, who refers the visitor to a second official: he in his turn passes the request on to a third, and so on through a complicated hierarchical aristocracy, until at last permission is given to approach the king himself.

The same applies to the *Kraal* above. Isaiah Shembe, one of the Messiah-figures of the Zulus, wrote in one of his hymns, *singena ngabanye*, 'We enter (Heaven) with the help of others,' i.e. we enter Heaven through the one who has power to open or close the Gate. But what does he look like, this heavenly Gate-keeper? What are his characteristics? We shall pause for a moment to look at one aspect of the Bantu Separatist churches, the struggle over the picture of God.

2 Cor. iv: 4 and Col. i: 15 speak of Christ as the image or *ikon* of God. The important question for the African is this: when God turns to the Whites, he obviously uses the image—*ikon*, *persona*—which they call the White Christ; but when He turns to us, the Bantu, what form and what image does He use in order to make Himself known to us?

Seen in a Dream

They have seen him in the glittering *dream*-world. The Bantu are people for whom dreams are not merely passing fancies; for many the dream is a channel used by God for the revelation which he wills to make to his host here on earth. That is why it is so important to record their dreams. We are dealing with people who recently have bid farewell to their traditional African religion and gone over to some Christian milieu. They are now trying to tell us how God was revealed to them. In dreams God appears in rich and dazzling colours, speaking the word of power; contact between the Almighty Himself and the puny dreamer is direct. In the harsh world of daylight the dreamer may be poor and despised, but in his dream-kingdom he is chosen, and privileged to receive the full generosity of the Almighty in His seeking, individualizing love.

Dreams, and the shining white clothes which the Bantu sees in his dreams, are important and have consequences for evangelism in Bantu Africa. I choose one example from Ceza mission-station, where I worked as a missionary from 1940 to 1942, and to which I returned in 1958 to conduct fresh investigations. I had interviews on both occasions with the elders of churches, in which I asked them to tell me the reasons why the first Christians forsook their old religion and joined the Lutheran congregation. The answer was often that this had happened

in some crisis of illness. The powerful White Christ had cured them, through his messengers, and they had therefore transferred their allegiance to the white group. But the transition was very often made by way of response to a direct revelation of God in a dream. They saw a figure of dazzling brightness, which they identified as the White Christ preached by the missionaries; or they thought they saw themselves dressed in the white baptismal robe. There could be no more discussion: they had to break with all opposition and cross the boundary dividing traditional society from the Christian Church, and be received in baptism into the new tribe of the White Christ.

But this particular congregation was Lutheran, and the Lutheran missionaries dressed their church workers in black—black clerical clothes, black uniform for the evangelists, black blouse and skirt for the prayer-women, *abasizikazi*. New generations arose, both at Ceza and everywhere in Bantu Africa, but they still met the shining and dazzling visions in the wonderland of dreams. Meanwhile a dynamic new religious group had arisen, in Zululand and elsewhere, calling themselves 'Zionists' and wearing white ankle-length garments. So when the new generation at Ceza saw in their dreams these manifestations of light (*photisma*) it was taken to be a divine revelation that they should enter, not the black-clothed Lutheran group, but the fellowship of the Zionists with their white uniforms! We are, of course, not trying to maintain that this was the only reason for their transfer to Zionism. But anyone who has asked why the individual should have gone over from the mission to the Zionists, and has received in a thousand cases the answer: 'I had a dream', can well understand that it *is* a vital reason.

Extent and Causes

Just a few words on the extent of, and the reasons for, this movement. The prophetic, or Messianic, movements which we are considering are by no means limited to South Africa. They are known elsewhere than in Africa and occur in other parts of the African continent. But the movement is particularly extensive in South Africa, where it has grown remarkably quickly. The movement began in the 1890s, and by 1932 comprised 320 groups. The number of these Separatist churches is now over 2,100. Some of them are very small; others have a membership of 50,000—100,000 Africans. The movement as a whole has at least a million adherents. This is in point of fact *the most important modern indigenous African movement in South Africa*, and its existence

poses a disquieting, but vital, problem for the missionary Church in Southern Africa. Among the *causes* of the movement we may point out four.

1. Racial discrimination in South Africa which, with the increasing tempo of popular education, is becoming steadily more and more intolerable; public life, the post office, railways, scouting, the universities, even the churches—none can be entirely exonerated. In 1940 I asked: 'Why has this or that African minister left the mission and gone over to the Separatists?' In 1958 I found that I had to reformulate the question: 'How is it that this or that African minister still continues in the mission? How is it that he still retains some loyalty to his old fellowship?' One highly-qualified Bantu minister, active in a church which has a name for being rather radical in advancing the interests of the African, had this to say, in 1958: 'The trouble is that I am never treated as a human being.' There, in a word, lies the entire problem.
2. The denominational disunity of the western churches and missions.
3. Inter-tribal tensions, between Zulu and Suto, Zulu and Swazi, etc.
4. The personal desire for power, in a situation in which the formation of a religious group offers one of the few means by which the African is able to assume some measure of personal authority.

The Bantu Messiah

The occasion was the great July festival of 1958, and tens of thousands of Zulus belonging to the Nazaretha group, *ama Nazaretha*, had gathered some twenty-five miles north of Durban. On the Sabbath all were assembled in 'Paradise', near the grave of the late Prophet, Isaiah Shembe, who died in 1935. His son, John Galilee Shembe, is the present leader of the group, and it was he who led this great meeting. At the beginning of the service, he suddenly requested me to preach. (I was in fact the first European who had ever received such a request.) I took as my text the closing words of Matt. xi: 'Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden. . . . Take my yoke upon you . . .' The Prophet Shembe took up where I left off. He began with the White Christ, but soon went over to speak about his father, Isaiah Shembe, fully conscious that his listeners considered Isaiah Shembe to be the Zulus' own Messiah. 'I do not know who Shembe was. I am his son, but I do not know who he was. Isaiah Shembe was not born in the same way as you or me; he was born of the Spirit. He was Spirit. Shembe was not of the world: he was of Heaven, he was a servant sent by God. We know that God is not at the other side of the ocean; he is here among us.'

The latter expression was reminiscent of a sermon I had heard from the same man eighteen years earlier, at the same July festival of the *ama Nazaretha*. On that occasion, J. G. Shembe had said: 'Zulus, you have heard sermons about a God who is without arms and legs—who has no love and no mercy. But Isaiah Shembe has proclaimed a God

who walks on his legs and works with his arms, and who is loving and merciful.'

The White Christ may have been the Christ of the white men, and may be on the other side of the ocean, but Shembe expressed the hunger of the masses for *a revelation here and now*, for a Messiah of their own flesh and blood, able above all to heal the sick and to restore the dead to life. Shembe is considered to be their own Messiah, the Bantu Messiah. In one of their creeds it is written: 'I believe in the Father and the Holy Spirit and the communion of the saints of the *amaNazaretha*.' Here there is no longer any room for the Son; his place has been usurped by another, by the Zulu Messiah himself. They reckon with a repeated revelation, the particular trade-mark of religious syncretism: in this case a revelation repeated for the Zulus, similar to that which was once given to the Jews. There was no longer any question of a revelation having taken place once and for all, nor of the great High Priest who entered the Holy of Holies once and for all.

It is to some extent possible to fix the point in time at which faith in the White Christ was exchanged for faith in the Black Messiah. It ties up with a decisive political event in the life of the African population: a new land law for the African, passed in 1913. The Bantu suddenly discovered that they had lost their land, and that they no longer had the right to buy land. The years immediately following the passing of this law saw the break-through of the radical apocalyptic groups. One particular Bible text took on a burning actuality for Africans over the whole of South Africa at this time. It was Deut. xviii:15:

The Lord thy God will raise up unto thee a Prophet
from the midst of thee, of thy brethren, like unto me:
unto him shall ye hearken.

The very name of Jesus lost its power over the minds of many. The Jehovah of the Old Testament became the powerful, the uniting name. Behind the shield of the name of Jehovah, the Bantu prophet who arose in their midst was identified with Jehovah. The white man's Sunday Jesus had to make way for the Jehovah of the Sabbath—merely a covering name for the prophet in their midst—who had become the Black Messiah standing at the Gate of Heaven.

From many points of view the most remarkable of these groups is the Southern Rhodesian Zionist Church belonging to the Shona tribe, which group numbers some 2,000 adherents. Here we have a little group which has migrated from Salisbury in S. Rhodesia to Port Elizabeth, on the Indian Ocean in the southernmost part of South Africa. They now

form a closely-knit little group in the slums of a strange land, where they are entirely self-supporting, thanks mainly to their skill at basket-making. They are altogether subservient to their leader, who was originally called Shoniwa, but who now bears the name John Masowe ('John from the Wilderness').

When I visited them in 1958 I enquired after their leader, only to be told that he was not there; it is quite possible that the very man with whom I was talking was in fact the leader, John Masowe himself. But just as the African dancer will sometimes perform wearing a mask in order to identify himself with the person or object represented on the mask, so there were two or three men in the colony whose task it was to be a *persona*, a mask, or a representative of the actual Messiah whom they believed to be dwelling in their midst; in the same way John from the Wilderness was himself a *persona* of God. He is referred to as 'the Servant' or 'the Mediator' or 'Moses' or 'John the Baptist' or 'Jesus in our midst'. One of the hymns written about him includes these words: 'The Saviour Jesus has come today. He lives among us and now we live—with Thee.' Concerning their dead, they believe that after death these gather at the Gate of Heaven, and there wait until that day when John Masowe himself shall come and open the Gate for them.

A White Christ for us Africans?

The question of the White Christ leaves nobody in peace. It becomes intense on the night between Easter Eve and Easter Day. In the churches of South Africa, both in the missions and in the separatist groups, the command to 'Watch with Christ' is taken literally. During the course of Easter Night, 1958, I travelled from eight in the evening to eight the next morning from chapel to chapel in the Orlando district of Johannesburg, and heard there how mission churches and separatist groups struggled with the problem of the White Christ. Is this Jesus really a Mediator and Saviour for Africans too?

In the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Pastor R. showed me a cross, worked in dark brick and cemented into the whitewashed wall of the newly-built church. It did not strike me as being particularly remarkable, but in his sermon the Pastor asked this question: 'Has anyone ever seen a cross which was not *white*? The white man has corrupted the Cross and made it the sign of the white races—which it is not! With this brick cross we want to show that Jesus Christ is not only the God of Englishmen and Boers, but of all men—for us, too.'

Then on to the great revivalist Nicolas Bhengu, who once was a Lutheran, but who is now the leader of a very large group which is closely connected with American Pentecostal groups in South Africa. His message is deep and central, and bears considerable traces of the Lutheran doctrine which he learned at an earlier stage. In his sermon he said: 'God is a good God. But he is not a European. Anyone who says that is a fool. Jesus has never set foot on the soil of Europe or America or Australia. But—Jesus has been in Africa.' 'We must understand that no black man can give us peace; only Jesus can give us peace. God is a good God.'

My next visit was to the Lutheran group in Jabavu, near Orlando. This was between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. on Easter morning. Here both men and women were taking part in a testimony meeting. In imagination, they were present in the Garden of Gethsemane—watching with Christ. One of the prayer-women said: 'We blacks are sorrowful. When we leave here, the police and the police-cars will persecute us. I am old and have no ointment. Our only hope is Jesus Christ. I can see Jesus now in Gethsemane, in the garden of sorrows. He looks as though He were white—but no, He is not white! He is the Saviour of the whole world: our Saviour, my Saviour.'

Still later, we paid a visit to a Zionist group which is under the overall leadership of a prophetess, Ma Nku. The leader of the local group is called Pastor Msibi, a specialist in rites of purification. He preaches an interesting brand of 'water-mysticism' and among other things offers animal sacrifices on a fire altar outside the church. He uses the ashes from these sacrifices in his healing rites. But despite all this he understood who Jesus was, and expressed his knowledge in words not easily forgotten: *umuntu ungumuntu ngomuntu*, 'man becomes man through Him who became man'. We are no more than potential men; we become men through the one who humbled himself and suffered death upon the Cross.

The Task of the Missions and the Church

How does this affect the task which has been entrusted to the missionary Church in Southern Africa? We must remember that hundreds of thousands of the adherents of these separatist churches have previously belonged to mission churches, but since they found no spiritual home in the world of the white men, they have been unable to hold the White Christ as the object of their faith. Division of churches,

Isaiah Shembe, Bantu Messiah

Edouard Leclerc outside one of his shops

and the thousands of splinter groups which have resulted, have created uncertainty and a form of spiritual vagrancy which is a burden to be borne. That text from Matthew, about the Saviour who had compassion on the multitudes 'because they fainted and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd' was brought home to me over and over again when these groups met together.

In this situation, we may sum up the task of the mission churches under four headings.

1. In order to meet the need revealed here, the missionary Church must attend to *pastoral care*, which implies, *inter alia*, that there must be a sufficiently large number of well-educated ministers, both Western and African, to be able to deal with the situation.
2. The Church must give a *bolder translation* of the Christian message to the actual conditions and actual need of the Bantu. This implies an Africanization of forms of public worship and the use of such African means of expression as music, song, rhythm, and instruments; it is a question no less of the Africanization of the entire life of fellowship within the Church.
3. New attempts must be made in the direction of *church unity* in order that the present fragmentation might be repaired and the goal of 'one flock under one Shepherd' might be realized.
4. The Christian Church must be interpreted as *one family, a brotherhood under one Father*, all created in one and the same blood, and liberated through the same blood. This fundamental Biblical truth must be treated seriously.

Under such conditions as these, many who at present dare not acknowledge the White Christ may yet come to recognize Him as their Saviour and hail Him as their 'very God'.

THOMAS COCHRANE ESSAY COMPETITION, 1960

The Survey Application Trust (World Dominion Press) is offering one or more prizes, the total value of which will be £100, under the title: 'The Thomas Cochrane Essay Competition'.

The prize for 1960 is offered to West Africa: Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ghana, Nigeria and Cameroon. It will be given for the best essay or essays submitted by African writers on the topic: 'How can the Church in Africa be both African and yet World-Wide?' It is requested that essays should include comments on church services and the Christian sacraments in African settings, and on Christian fellowship in contemporary Africa.

The Survey Application Trust was established in 1924 and was for many years led by the late Dr Thomas Cochrane. Among its activities has always been the publication of literature on the urgent necessity for the Church to be truly integrated into the life of the people it serves and to whom it witnesses.

Essays for the Competition are to be of not more than 10,000 words in length and must be received at the office of the Survey Application Trust, 59 Bryanston Street, London, W.1, on or before the 1st July, 1960.

MARCEL REGUILHEM

A Christian Grocer

Causes an upheaval among French shopkeepers

Edouard Leclerc is in grocery as a Christian vocation. He has said that if his Church had married priests he would be a priest. In France, retail distribution has long been known as one of the weak points of the social system. Anyone following a similar lay vocation in another country would no doubt operate in other ways.

HIS progress is like that of an advancing army. November 1959: Edouard Leclerc is at Issy les Moulineaux, near Paris. December 1959: he opens his first shop in the heart of Paris itself. . . . The other shopkeepers sit up, consumers watch the activities of this new type of shopkeeper with interest and curiosity.

There are a great many shopkeepers in France, about 800,000, which means seventeen retailers per 1,000 inhabitants, a higher figure than almost anywhere else in Europe. These shopkeepers sell little, they sell dear, especially in the food lines; retailers' margins vary from 4 per cent for sugar to 45 per cent and even more for fruit and vegetables. They buy little, they buy dear.

Outworn structures impede the mechanism of free competition, help speculation and encourage waste. The lengthy channels of distribution, the too numerous intermediaries, have frequently been complained of, as well as non-standard goods and poor installations. The shopkeeper does not make much profit and the housewife very rarely sees before her eyes the result of lower prices, even when the wholesale prices of Brittany cauliflowers and Languedoc tomatoes touch bottom.

French trade has tried to do something to fight against these depressing signs of old age. *Big business* is tending more and more to swallow up the small business. Every year five to six thousand shops disappear whilst the chain stores open new branches, or instal new departments in the old branch. In ten years the turnover of the chain stores and the co-operatives has more than doubled. Self-service tempts the housewife; supermarkets are opening up everywhere in France: Bagneaux, Lyon, and shortly in Bordeaux, Nancy and Grenoble.

There are only two choices open to the small business man: (1) to admit failure and disappear; (2) to use the same weapons as the big food chain stores, adapting them to small business.

The old-fashioned small shopkeeper can first of all take part in the *buying groups*. This amounts to becoming a kind of voluntary 'branch' shop. There are already about 400 buying groups in France covering more than 50,000 retailers.

But, will the new sales methods of this section of French activity, which has been static and apathetic for so long, be sufficient to bring prices down? Will they bring in their train a sufficient and permanent improvement in buying power? No. These timid little attempts have nothing of revolution in them; which is why Edouard Leclerc wanted to do better.

Monsieur Leclerc bears no resem-

blance to the professional revolutionary, Monsieur Leclerc is a grocer.

His great adventure began in 1949. He studied at a theological college but did not become a priest, and entered business at the age of twenty-three years. He knew that the distributive channels, with their too greedy middlemen and their too numerous retailers, were largely responsible for the high cost of living.

He found a good spot at Landerneau in Brittany. Gathering together his savings, and buying chiefly on credit, he placed an order to the tune of Frs 300,000 direct with a biscuit manufacturer at Pontivy—and for three weeks he sold nothing but biscuits. But he sold them all because he sold cheaper than anyone else. Leclerc then bought more biscuits, oil, and other goods; in a year his turnover amounted to Frs 9,000,000. He grew; with his own hands he built another shop, not very smart, it is true, and looking more like a warehouse or a garage. What matter? Leclerc sells 20 per cent cheaper than the other grocers, his 'brother enemies'. For clearly the tradesmen in the district were not sitting still.

They brought pressure to bear on members of Leclerc's family; manufacturers were threatened with boycott by the whole of the normal trade if they continued to sell their goods to Leclerc. Just in time to save him from being smothered came the law of August 23, 1953. This law makes any refusal to sell punishable by terms of three to six months' imprisonment. People solemnly promised not to patronize his shop; but so advantageous were the prices that they did do so on the quiet. Leclerc was even reported to the tax authorities, but for weeks inspectors searched his accounts in vain: Leclerc hid nothing. He was even sued—no matter, he still forged ahead.

His secret? He buys direct from the producer. He sells on a margin of about 9 per cent: 6 per cent for overheads reduced to the minimum (no glittering shops, no chromium plating, no neon lights, such luxuries are too dear), 3 per cent for profit. In other words, he takes a wholesaler's margin, and the housewife benefits to the extent of what would have gone into the pockets of those between her and the producer, i.e. the middlemen and the traditional retailer: about 20 per cent.

By 1954 Leclerc is a celebrity through-Brittany. He gives to retailers who undertake only to sell at wholesale prices a label: *Distribution Centre of Leclerc's Food Products.* In this way he sets himself up at Brest, Le Mans, Niort, Rennes, Angers, Bayeux, Caen...

Eventually, at the request of a group of friends, Leclerc decides in September 1958 to go to Grenoble, one of the most expensive towns in France. He opens a shop and in a month does Frs 25 million turnover. He sells at record prices even eggs (Frs 15 each instead of Frs 24) or oysters. This naturally sparks off hostilities. Leclerc's competitors set up a new chain at Grenoble—the SAVECO

(*Sav*oir *Eco*nomiser, i.e. the Know-how of Saving) with six shops. They decide to fight Leclerc on his own ground by selling cheaper than he. Leclerc's turnover falls considerably, it drops to half. It remains, however, enough to make the Leclerc shop at Grenoble a practical proposition.

Leclerc's shops sells at advantageous prices; so does the SAVECO chain, and, in order to remain in the race, all the other shopkeepers in the town have to fall into line. Leclerc has won!

His biggest victory is at Tours. When he announces his intention of opening a shop in this town, the chain stores immediately lower their prices, followed smartly by the other grocers. In the end Leclerc finds it unnecessary to set himself up in Tours, and the story repeats itself at Lyon. Today there are more than sixty Leclerc shops in France.

He has been accused of defrauding the revenue—wrongly; of under-paying his employees, whereas he often pays better than his competitors (in Paris Frs 47,000 net per month for a young saleswoman working 47½ hours per week).

Principally, however, he is accused today of not adhering to the accepted rules of the game, in other words of not carrying on legitimate business. Here are the counts in the indictment:

1. *He sells only a few goods*, with easy outlet: dry groceries (cereals, coffee, biscuits, preserves, etc.) oil, cleaning materials or toilet articles. What was true at the beginning is no longer true. The Leclerc shops sell, for instance, 1,500 different kinds of goods at Landerneau: cooked meats, butter, cheeses, eggs, oysters, fish. He even sells some textiles sometimes.

2. *He pays less tax* than the others. Correct, because as he sells at wholesale prices he is exempt from certain taxes. But a very recent objective study has revealed that even a change in their tax liability would not smother the Leclerc shops; the effect of these small tax advantages on the prices is negligible.

3. *He makes no effort at display.* It is sometimes true that his shops look more like warehouses, but the shop at Brest is one of the finest in the neighbourhood, that at Grenoble is very spacious, others are very well fitted up. What is true is that Leclerc refuses to sacrifice to the aesthetic anything which will put up overheads.

Taking into account the importance of foodstuffs in the family budget, a housewife can hope for a 1 to 5 per cent improvement in her purchasing power by buying only from Leclerc. This saving is all the more to be appreciated when one remembers that the flaring up of agricultural prices due to the dry summer in 1959 led everyone to expect the worst, that is, a revival of the famous prices-wages spiral. In any case, Edouard Leclerc's success is not so far removed from the policy of lower prices forced on retailers and producers by the advice of the Government.

Reform in the distributive trade has, therefore, begun in France. The existence of the Leclerc system has shown up all the decay and incoherence of the old commercial channels. This in itself is an improvement for the consumer.

Perfection has not yet been reached: there is still, for example, the organization of the market in perishable goods and the meat market to be tackled. The old style butcher, that artist of expensive service, would be transformed into a simple distributor, all the work on the meat being done in the *abattoirs*.

Evolution continues, it would be useless to try yet to mark the limits and the dangers. It might be feared that one day commercial concentration might suddenly and monstrously leap forward to the detriment of the liberty of the individual. One might fear that the chains and buying groups might impose their dictatorships (very effective and very direct dictatorships, since they concern food) on the shopkeepers and consumers alike. One might finally fear that there might arise lines of distribution with commercial, political and social leanings which would sell all sorts of things at once. There is in Paris already 'an ideological grocery'.

It is in the interests of both shopkeeper and consumer that in reforming itself the trade should keep its sense of proportion and of humanity.

THE CHRISTIAN FRONTIER COUNCIL

is arranging a

Frontier Luncheon

on Tuesday, 8th March, 1960, at the YMCA, 112 Great Russell Street, WC1, to which all readers and their friends are invited.

FR MARTIN JARRETT-KERR, C.R.

will speak on

'AFRICAN PARADOXES'

Fr Jarrett-Kerr, who has recently returned from several years' work in Johannesburg, is a member of the Community of the Resurrection. In South Africa he was Chaplain at Baragwarnath Native Hospital and a colleague of Fr. Huddleston. He is well-known as a theologian and a literary critic, and his views on the African situation after his long sojourn in the country should be of exceptional interest.

The chair will be taken by

THE RT HON. JAMES GRIFFITHS, MP, former Colonial Secretary

Buffet lunch 12.45; talk and discussion 1.15—2 p.m.

Admission by ticket only, obtainable until 4th March

Please apply on the form enclosed in this number, sending 3s. 6d. per person

H. S. D. GARVEN

Why be a Medical Missionary Today?

AS an old friend of Dr R. G. Cochrane I feel compelled to continue, from a Chinese background, the discussion which he has begun and to which Dr Fairfield has already made such a sound contribution.

It is essential that in our approach to this problem we face squarely five points:

1. The increasing development of health services by the governments of Asian and Africa countries must of necessity increase the insecurity of tenure of appointment of the medical missionary. Surely this should not be viewed with alarm, but with gratitude to God. That these new governments desire to give health services to their peoples, that they desire full control of these services, and of all medical and nursing education, is right: this has after all happened all over Europe.

2. The ever-increasing cost of modern medical treatment and education must make the continuation of mission hospitals and missionary medical colleges, at standards which are technically acceptable, more and more difficult. This inevitably means concentration of effort, i.e. fewer hospitals with better staffing and equipment, and probably soon the complete abandonment of Christian medical colleges. It is clear that few of the 'young churches' are financially able to continue the work of highly organized mission hospitals. All this must make the intending candidate a little doubtful of his future.

3. The change in the position of the middle class in Britain is also not without deterrent effect. It was from this class that the great majority of missionaries came in the past fifty or sixty years. When Dr Cochrane and I went abroad as missionaries we had the assurance of a family home to which to return on furlough; we had confidence in readily finding places for our children in the schools of our choice, and in many other ways our path was smoothed out before us. This is no longer true.

4. In those days also we looked for appointment by a mission board in this country and went out to be subject to the direction of a missionary body on the field. Today the call, rightly, is to place oneself unreservedly at the service of the 'young church' and to be allocated work at its discretion.

5. The increased rigidity and inflexibility of the National Health Service makes, as Dr Fairfield so rightly points out, re-entry into a suitable type of medical work in Britain, in an emergency due to ill-health abroad or some other cause, by no means certain. This is true of Colonial Service appointments as well as missionary ones. Some indeed of those who returned from China after the setting up of the Communist régime found it necessary to emigrate with their families to find suitable employment.

To my mind, therefore, there can be

no doubt that acceptance of the missionary call involves today a much greater measure of sacrifice than it did in the 1920s.

In the past, two types of men have gone abroad as medical missionaries. There were those who had had a very direct experience of a 'call' to go and preach the Gospel, often indeed in a specific foreign land. In their preparations to this end they added an MB or one of the Diplomas of the Royal Colleges, but the practice of medicine was to them almost a means to an end. They were men of definite views and high courage, who brooked no interference, and took a paternalistic view of their relationships with the local Christian community and its rising leaders. There were also those who, feeling profoundly that medicine was their vocation, were men of few words. They were the 'Edward Wilsons' of the missionary movement. They had little desire or inclination to preach, but their whole pattern of life was that of a total giving of themselves to others; they were, like their Master, easily moved with compassion as they looked on their ailing fellowmen. Their lives of kindly thoughtfulness among a foreign people spoke much more loudly and effectively than did the few words they added to their treatment of the bodily ills. Their religion was not something added to their careers as physicians and surgeons, but the very essence of their twenty-four hour daily unstinted service of others.

There is still medical work of very different kinds waiting to be done abroad, work that will not be done unless by volunteers from countries such as Britain.

There are still a few of the essentially pioneer jobs. Opportunities remain to run the one-man mission hospital with the bare minimum of, it may be, rather antiquated equipment, surrounded by a small staff that has been trained by the missionary himself. In spite of all its technical drawbacks it offers a life that can give to the independent Christian spirit intense satisfaction.

There are still many larger Christian hospitals where a team of several doctors, with fully trained nurses, provide an invaluable—and in some instances still the only—service in larger or smaller districts. In these days there will be all the attendant worries of administration, the perennial lack of trained staff, the recurrent problem of furlough, and a continual wrestling with increasing costs. But in the relief of suffering, in the training of native personnel, in the co-operation with the local Christian community, there is a life of rare fullness and worthwhile service.

There are still one or two Christian medical colleges, where specialist jobs are open to those who find their talents fully extended in the most profitable work of all, the creation in another country of fully-qualified doctors, nurses, pharmacists and health visitors, who are not only technically sound but are also imbued with the Spirit of Christ and go out in His service to their own people.

There are perhaps also, as Dr Cochrane suggests, a few specialist services which remain to be pioneered by the Christian medical missionary. But for all of these the days may be numbered. And if they cease, what then? Is there to be no further call? No further outgoing?

Has the time not come to begin thinking of a new pattern of Christian medical service overseas? Is it possible to offer to the young British medical graduate the opportunity of service as a general practitioner with the backing of a local Asian or African Christian community with whom he would live and whose servant he would be? Or a post in a civil hospital in a newly-formed medical

service, working as one of a team with the local doctors under the orders of a local board and superintendent? Or to a nurse, the chance to be a district nurse or health visitor with a centre close to the local pastor of the indigenous church, or as a medical teacher or nursing sister-tutor in a government medical college or training centre? Too difficult? It will make greater demands than ever before but perhaps that is just what is needed if we are to win recruits. It will require adaptability, a flair for a new language or dialect, a willingness to co-operate, a largeness of heart that will stand above pettiness and jealousies. But, in it all, Christianity can be expressed; a Christian life can be lived, cheerfully unruffled, quietly confident, permeated with an overriding sense of the value of human personality.

If you are to call anyone to this service what do you expect from the candidate? First, and foremost, a personal experience of Christ, expressed perhaps as 'there but for the Grace of God goes . . .'; a confidence that there goes with him a new source of regenerative possibilities, in that he is sure of being 'in the way of salvation'. And second, a concern in the true Quaker sense, an urgent awareness that having received much, much must be given; and, overriding all, a compulsive compassion that drives a man to his uttermost service for each diseased and distressed man, woman and child.

And for those who can't go to the ends of the earth, what? A renewed sense of responsibility and a larger giving: a determination to smooth the path for those who do go, in the provision of furlough houses, school accommodation for children, homes for children left in this country, and much else of a personal nature; a renewed pressure on the authorities to make re-entry into medical services in this country much easier; and a constant remembrance in prayer.

FRONTIER FIXTURES

6th–11th July

CONSULTATION FOR EVANGELISTS at the Ecumenical Institute, Château de Bossey, Céligny, Vaud, Switzerland.

This consultation intends to bring together evangelists of different types from all parts of the world. Participation by invitation only. Persons interested should contact the Director of the Ecumenical Institute, Dr H. H. Wolf.

13th–23rd July

COURSE FOR LAY PEOPLE. Also at Bossey.

This course is intended for lay people engaged in secular occupations (preferably between the ages of 25 and 45). Applications should be made before 1st April to the National Correspondents of the Institute (in the case of British applicants this is the Revd Kenneth Slack, British Council of Churches, 10 Eaton Gate, London, SW1).

Frontier Chronicle

Edited by MARK GIBBS

CHRISTIAN COUNCIL OF KENYA

The origins of the Christian Council of Kenya go back to the earliest days of missionary activity. Christian bodies found it essential to have some instrument for co-operation, especially in dealings with Government over health and education. What makes it unique in Africa today is the fact that, during the Emergency, when Mau Mau hit the headlines of the world press, large sums of money from all over the world came into the country to help in Christian work. Much of it came through the Inter Church Aid Department of the British Council of Churches. This made it possible for the CCK to employ a considerable staff, both European and African. Three years ago, I was recruited from parish work in Sheffield to go and do a training job there.

Mau Mau had led to a great deal of suffering for the Kikuyu people, so naturally much of the money which came from overseas was spent on social service work. Six Community Centres established by the churches to help the African population of Nairobi were outstanding examples of this. But many of the church-leaders felt very strongly that it would be wrong to use all the money which had unexpectedly come into the Colony on this social service work, vitally important though it is. They felt that there is something even more important—training ordinary Christian people in the fundamentals of the Christian faith, as these apply in a country in the throes of a social revolution.

This is a critical time for Christianity in Kenya. So I work as part of a team whose job it is to help people to understand the relevance of the Bible to the social, economic and political changes which are shaking Africa today. We run courses, conferences and study groups, partly in the English language and partly in vernaculars. Much of my own time is spent in editing *Rock*, an English-language monthly paper, read by Africans and Europeans, in which we try to stimulate Christian thinking on some of the vital problems of our time.

I wish I could say that the work we are doing means that the churches and missions in Kenya are really alive to their responsibilities in society. What I can say is this: Mau Mau deeply shook the churches, and thinking Christians of all races came to realize, more than ever before, that a faith which is not related to the things of this world will have little effect in East Africa, and may not survive at all. For example, nationalism is sweeping Kenya like other parts of Africa; it isn't good enough for African Christians to say, as many of them have in the past, that politics is a dirty game in which no Christian should indulge. Attitudes such as these are still helping to lose large numbers of young educated people from our churches. Again, scientific ideas are having a tremendous impact on young Africans. An intermediate school-teacher told me that he was shattered by a question from his class: 'What has happened to God now that the Russian rocket has gone through heaven?'

One of the greatest difficulties is the obvious fact of the differences in outlook and belief among the member-churches of the Christian Council. As you would expect, the tensions in a group which includes Anglicans, Pentecostals, Presbyterians, Baptists, Methodists, Quakers, as well as various undenominational bodies, are very great. These differences do not appear so serious when it is simply a matter of meeting on committees. But when the Christian Council started to do training work, at once we

began to explore the limits of co-operation. This is a great adventure. But no-one can pretend that it is easy.

There are also real difficulties for any of us from the West, with our high standards of living, who are working in a country like Kenya where there is so much poverty. How do we show a real partnership with our African colleagues? How do we show practical sympathy with African ministers who are never quite sure whether they will get their small pay at the end of the month? I would couple this with the difficulty of teaching a positive Christian attitude towards raising the standard of living, without blessing the ghastly materialism which is in some senses the most devastating and destructive gift which the West has bestowed on Africa. I don't know the answer to that one. But we go on working in the certainty that Jesus Christ has His word for this turbulent, tragic but exciting Continent today.

STANLEY BOOTH-CLIBBORN

THE MINISTRY OF RECONCILIATION?

The long-awaited Constitutional Conference on the future of Kenya got off to a slow start in January, and did not meet in full session at all for the first week. The first occasion on which nearly all the members of the Conference, African, Asian and European, met each other after the official start of the Conference was at a reception given by the Church Missionary Society in their honour at the Society's London headquarters. In the event, the reception took place at the very hour when a resolution of the immediate deadlock was being worked out.

To meet the delegates were people very widely representative of the churches and religious organizations in Britain. In fact, the list of those present looks something like a gathering of the Kenya Conference with the British Council of Churches, the Conference of British Missionary Societies, the Roman Catholic Church, and a few others for good measure!

Clearly the organizers knew how to make a party go. The presence of photographers and reporters added to the fun. In no time they had Kenya political rivals shaking hands, and posing happily for photographs with the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Colonial Secretary.

It may be thought significant that it was a church body which was able to bring all these different elements together.

NORTHERN FRONTIERS

We are glad to give some details of two Scottish Frontier Groups, which have now been flourishing for some time.

The Edinburgh Frontier Group

The Edinburgh Frontier Group began in essence in 1949, when the Bishop of Edinburgh had some informal discussions with people from local industry. Some forty people, representing employers and trade unionists, local government, education, the Church and the Law, came to the formal launching of the Group in 1950.

The 'frontier' is a neutral meeting place between people of different persuasions and concerns, where the problems of contemporary society may be freely discussed, and the subject matter of our discussions is often directly concerned with questions of daily work. We find ourselves forced, however, to examine many other aspects of the common life. We try to avoid getting lost in large general questions like: 'What ought to be done about society?' and aim rather to ask ourselves: 'What ought we and what can we do about this particular problem of society which thrusts itself upon our attention?'

Our programme for 1959–60 involves six meetings on the theme 'What are our Motives?' Subjects are 'Why do we work?', 'Why should we care about

politics?', 'Why go to a university?', 'Why care about the starving millions?', 'Why be active in a trade union?', 'Why go to church?'.

The general pattern of meetings is an introductory talk by one or two speakers followed by free discussion lasting one to one-and-a-half hours.

The chairman of the Group is the Bishop of Edinburgh, Dr. Warner; and the council is composed of industrialists, trade unionists, clergymen, a university professor, a schoolmaster, a lawyer, and an MP.

In addition to its main function of bringing together for mutual discussion people of diverse interest, the Group co-operated in preparing material for discussion at Kirk Week at Dundee in 1959.

It is now taking part in a further series of discussions by church and industry groups in Scotland in 1960 on the theme, 'A Christian Purpose for Industry in the New Age'.

F. J. BOLTON

The Glasgow Frontier Group

The Glasgow Frontier Group might be called the step-grandchild of the Christian Frontier Council. The idea came from the Edinburgh Group, and the initial impetus came from the former existence in Glasgow of a Diocesan Branch of the Industrial Christian Fellowship.

The aim of the Glasgow Group has been much the same as that of the Edinburgh one, namely to provide a meeting place where people of various occupations and different political and religious beliefs could come together for free and frank discussion of questions of common concern. It thus represents the frontier where church people meet with their colleagues and fellows who are outside the Church.

In the five years or so of its existence, the Group has had a fluctuating total membership of around fifty, though actual attendances at particular meetings are usually more like twenty. The range of members has been wide—industrialists, personnel managers, teachers, both school and university, lawyers, clerks, housewives, a few trade union officials and even one or two clergy, both Presbyterian and Episcopalian. Meetings have been kept down to four a session, because of the range of other commitments of most of those concerned.

After a first experimental session, each year's series has had a central theme. Up till now these have been 'Fair Shares for All', 'War and Peace', 'Government', 'Whither Society?' and, this year, 'Let Glasgow Flourish'. They have certainly aroused a good deal of interest. Discussion has been both animated and fruitful and new people have continually been attracted.

Yet one cannot help feeling that there has been a certain lack of direction in what we have been doing. We have tended to become too much of an enjoyable discussion group, which, though valuable in itself, does not really get very far. We have been less successful than the Edinburgh Group in making any real impact on the life of the city. No doubt this is partly because Glasgow is larger and more complex than Edinburgh and also because we did not start off with such influential contacts in the city's business and political life.

This year, in the hope of earthing our discussions rather more in local realities, we are taking a look at our city's own problems. Under the theme 'Let Glasgow Flourish' we began with a masterly exposition of the Glasgow Redevelopment Plan, given by Bailie William Taylor, the Convenor of the Corporation's Planning Committee. He left us in no doubt of the magnitude of the problem of tackling the city's appalling housing problems. This is to be followed by meetings on 'The City's Economy', on 'Glasgow's Social Problems', and on 'The Changing Character of the City'.

JOHN SLEEMAN

BUSINESS GOT THE HIGH SCHOOLS OPEN

Our contemporary *Christianity and Crisis* has published some pointed comments on the developments in the southern United States, contributed by Mr Roger L. Shinn of the Divinity School of Vanderbilt University. He writes:

'Let us start with a fairly obvious

fact. The forces producing social change in the South are primarily economic. We might wish that religious faith and conscience were doing more, but industrialization, urbanization and commercial progress are the processes that everyone must reckon with. There is nothing sordid about these economic forces, they are part of God's creation, and, like religion, may serve or defy him. We can be thankful that, while the economy once made slavery profitable, now it makes segregation costly to everyone.

'The evidences are clear on all sides. Rising Negro purchasing power undermines old patterns of racial etiquette; many an automobile salesman has welcomed a Negro customer and called him "Mister" in complete opposition to all his home training. The automobile is an equalizer in other ways; traffic regulations and signal lights simply cannot be adjusted to give whites all the advantages. Employers needing skilled labour must sometimes lose able employees and profits if the personnel office hangs out the sign, "Whites only". . . .

'The city of Little Rock offers a parable for the whole South. The churches, after some futile efforts to stop the flamboyant Faubus, lapsed into ineffectiveness. When the Governor closed the schools some churches co-operated by offering their resources for private, segregated, white education. Although some persistent and courageous pastors kept up their efforts, it was business, far more than the churches, that got the high schools reopened this fall. We can hope that some of the effective business men were influenced by their Christian faith; we can be sure that they were influenced by economics.

'The extensive plans to attract new industry to Little Rock were a colossal flop during the entire period of strife. The jibe went around that the only business showing gains was the moving business, which had plenty to do getting people out of town. When the Chamber of Commerce wanted the schools opened, the effect was something that the Ministers' Association could not produce. Granted all the legal and moral pressures at work, the economic ones were most prominent.

'A Christian can only be grateful that economic processes are opening doors for people who have been oppressed. But he must point out the limitations of economic change. When it brings new opportunities to people, it does not necessarily bring personal acceptance. The same limitations apply to the law, which can get Negroes inside the school building but not necessarily inside the community of students. . . .

'A church cannot accept the Negro as the baseball team does, saying: "If he helps us get the new building, we want him." Because the Church accepts persons, not abstract functions, churchmen with an inheritance of personal prejudice find it harder to welcome the Negro into the Church than into factory or professional sport. But the Church, because its unity is in Christ and not in personal preference, is in the midst of great pain discovering its mission today.

'In the Little Rock crisis when a few ministers preached forthrightly in support of school integration, segregationists hurled a telling challenge: "Why do you want to integrate the schools when your churches are segregated?" The embarrassment increased when a few Negroes turned up for Sunday worship at one of the white churches, only to be turned away by the ushers in spite of the pastor's pro-integration sermons. The Negroes said that they came in answer to a telephone invitation from the pastor's wife. This episode was generally regarded as a cunning trick of unscrupulous segregationists. But they could never have carried it off if the white churches had not been morally vulnerable.'

BASIC ASSISTANCE

A technical assistance team of the World Council of Churches has been working in Falerna, a small village south of Naples. Because needs in Falerna are so basic, the building of water closets has been one of the two major team-

work projects to date. In all the team has installed fifteen toilet and water facilities in one street, working with the peasants themselves to lay the main pipes along the street and the connecting pipes into each home.

The second major project has been getting the livestock out of the homes. For centuries the peasants of Falerna have shared their dismal hovels with their pigs, chickens and goats. Behind the crudity of the practice has been shrewd reasoning. The animals have a better chance of surviving the cold winters in the shelter of the homes, they help keep the room warm, and, as the family's most important possession, are kept safe from thieves.

The team has had to work slowly, building confidence step by step. The first to accept the help offered was the deacon of the village's Waldensian church.

Working with him, the team members constructed a modern cheap pig-sty of cement blocks on the hill behind his house, and moved in the ungainly ugly animal which had been occupying the deacon's one-room house all its life. The improvement was obvious to the most conservative villager, and, after having been assured of the animal's safety, others also asked for help. Thus far, the team has constructed twenty-four pig-sties on land owned by the peasants.

In co-operation with the agricultural school of the University of Bari, the team has started agricultural projects including seed test plots, irrigation, experiments in orchard improving and feeding experiments. They are also attempting to introduce more modern farm implements to replace the ancient wooden ones now mainly in use. Also under consideration by the team are plans for a slaughterhouse—the butcher shops on the main street now slaughter the animals in the road—a laundry and an expanded home repairs programme.

The most immediately obvious addition to the town made by the team is the prefabricated hut (donated by the Reformed Church of Holland). This is used for recreation, and also for sewing and cooking classes.

Because the team members wish to share as nearly as possible in the life and problems of the villagers, they live in the village in a small white two-storey house which they themselves helped construct.

The team directors, both in their twenties, Mr and Mrs van der Linden, were missionaries in Indonesia.

NANCY LAWRENCE

ROME AND THE REFORMATION

Several examples of growing co-operation and understanding between Roman Catholics and other Christians have come to our notice recently. In the Netherlands, Archbishop Alfrinck of Utrecht has spoken very sympathetically of the Ecumenical movement that is drawing Rome and the Reformation closer together. He admitted recently that some authentic Christian values were more carefully preserved in Protestant Christianity than in the Church of Rome. He added that while in the past the Bible was almost considered a Protestant book, Catholics today are strongly encouraged to undertake Bible study.

In the same country, the secretary of the Roman Catholic St. Willibrord Society also emphasizes a greater openness towards non-Roman Christians in the Netherlands. He said: 'It is not our concern to try and win "souls" or to make conversions in our contact with non-Catholics, but to show the true figure of Christ and His Church.' Already in about twenty places in the Netherlands, priests and Protestant ministers are holding conversations with each other, in order to get to know one another's thought and convictions. Nevertheless the Catholic Press Bureau has admitted that this is not yet common knowledge. Far too many Roman Catholics regard Protestants as heretics, and too many Protestants believe that worshipping images is practised by Catholics, and that they are not allowed to read the Bible. There is particular suspicion of Roman Catholic monasteries and nunneries.

In France, Roman Catholic and Protestant leaders joined together at Christmas in a unique special appeal for the Algerian refugees. Under the leadership of Cardinal Feltin and Pastor Marc Boegner, collections of food stuffs and clothing were made in many churches.

Ireland, too, is apparently forgetting some of her old religious differences. The *Guardian* reported recently that at Ballinahinch, Co. Galway, in the diocese of Tuam, the Church of Ireland (the Anglican communion) has a church but no parishioners, and the Roman Catholic Church has parishioners but no church. The Protestant church has been closed for some years, since no members of that communion are still living in the area. At the same time the Roman Catholics of Ballinahinch have been travelling a long distance, mostly over mountain roads, to reach a church of their own faith. The Church of Ireland has therefore recently announced that in these special circumstances it is in accordance with Christian principles that, rather than have Ballinahinch church demolished it should be given to meet the need for a proper place of worship for the Roman Catholic people in the district. The building is accordingly being transferred to the ownership of the authorities of the Roman Catholic diocese of Tuam.

UNEXPECTED FIGURES

Our contemporary *Plain View* has reported as follows:—

An Opinion Poll was conducted by the Slough Humanist Group. The inquiry took place upon one of the new council estates in Slough. About 300 persons were called upon of whom 265 agreed to answer questions.

Asked for their views upon the amount of time devoted to BBC sound and television religious programmes, 14 said it was too much, 25 said not enough, 188 just right, 40 didn't know. Asked whether they thought scripture lessons in schools are a waste of time or a good thing, 20 people said a waste of time, 213 a good thing, 19 gave qualified answers, and 13 didn't know.

The poll elicited the information that 176 were married in church, 73 in Registry office, 11 were single, with 5 refusals to answer. Of those married in church, 90 said it was because of their religion, and 86 due to social and conventional reasons. The figure of 90 who claimed to be religious at first sight appears high, but many of those who consider themselves to be religious do not carry it to the extent of regular church-going.

Faith Unites

. . . Christ is not, and cannot be divided. It would not be the case then that his followers should be so divided if they all received him in the fullness of what he is and in wholehearted fidelity to his word.

We have all of us, on different counts and in various degrees, something with which to reproach ourselves in this regard. Not one of us can in fact deceive himself into thinking that he realizes in his own person the exhortation of St Paul: 'May all the wealth of Christ's inspiration have its shrine among you' (Col. iii:16 Knox). It is never what we genuinely hold of this inspiration that divides but what we neglect in it, whether it is a question of our understanding, by faith, the content of its message, or whether it is a question of how the message springs to life in us. Faith, to the extent that we truly embrace it, unites us; it is our infidelities that hold us in separation.

Approaches to Christian Unity (p. 39)
C. J. Dumont, O.P. (Darton, Longman & Todd, 25s.)

DAVID L. EDWARDS

The Twentieth Century Sickness

THE Christian cause in Britain suffered grievously in 1959 through the suicides of Robert Nelson, Bishop of Middleton and formerly Rector of Liverpool, and Michael Foster, a philosophy tutor at Christ Church, Oxford, who was chairman of the university teachers' group associated with the Christian Frontier Council.

Both were senior men who, by what they were in themselves as well as by their innumerable good works, had helped many towards Christian faith and life. Both moved as respected and beloved figures in local, national, and even international circles, strengthening the Christian community. 'Parish and People', the liturgical and evangelistic movement in which Bishop Nelson was prominent, was—and is—watched throughout the Anglican Communion. Mr Foster was well known in Germany, had recently visited the Christian colleges of India and Japan, and was planning to tour the United States as chairman of the university teachers' committee associated with the World's Student Christian Federation.

It would be in deplorable taste to write anything here about the intimate causes of these very different tragedies—even if the writer were fully aware of them. In each case, those nearest the tragedy had many causes for compassion, and although shaken, do not seem to have lost faith (it is, of course, possible that unknown to the writer some friends did quietly abandon their previous Christian convictions). The interested public was treated as gently as the harsh circumstances allowed. Fine, and entirely right, tributes appeared in *The Times* and elsewhere. The memorial services in Manchester and Oxford Cathedrals were austere acts which expressed a solemn and yet merciful Gospel. The sermons of the Bishop of Manchester (about his Suffragan, Bishop Nelson) and of Professor Demant (about his colleague, Mr Foster) will be remembered with great gratitude, not least because they must have been so difficult to prepare. The Christian community cannot justly be condemned either for the occurrence of the tragedies or for its way of handling them once they had taken place.

And yet—it would be futile to pretend that such deaths do, or should, leave Christians undisturbed. Many of us have been bruised in heart and conscience. There is something of a revival in Christian life in Britain today, and no man did more than Bishop Nelson in inspiring new life in the parishes, just as no lay don did more than Mr Foster to guide and help forward Christian witness in the universities. Christians must be concerned that even long experience of leadership in the revival should not have averted these personal tragedies. We have now received the most fearful of warnings that Christian movements are not enough; the perfection of the twentieth century's favoured means of Christian revival—experiments and discussions, committees and conferences, memoranda and reports, books and constitutions—will not compensate for failure in the depths of personality. Therefore a few more words may be attempted within the fellowship of readers of FRONTIER.

One lesson we must draw from at least one of the tragedies is that more often than we thought technical psychiatric treatment is indispensable. Earnestness in personal prayer, sacramental grace and counselling by richly experienced pastors—all, no doubt, have their place in the Christian cure for mental illness, but the Christian who believes that these means of grace leave little or nothing else to be desired lays himself open to disaster. Too often is it assumed that Christian faith renders it unnecessary, perhaps indeed disgraceful, to turn to a psychiatrist for systematic treatment. This is particularly unfortunate because a good deal of psychological illness has physical causes, requiring physical treatment.

To proceed to a further reflection, not particularly related to these two cases: too few of the officers of the Church have intimate contacts with professional psychiatrists. There are too few clinics to make the meeting of pastors, psychiatrists and shy patients a little easier. One recalls the clinic founded by Dr Weatherhead at the City Temple in London, and the recent work of Dr Lee and others in establishing a service of advice for troubled Oxford undergraduates. One is glad, too, that *Christian Essays in Psychiatry*, a book sponsored by the Christian Frontier Council, has been made the basis of some beginnings of study in the theological colleges. And there is the work of the Guild of Health, etc. But as one thinks soberly of the contemporary dimensions of spiritual misery, one realizes that the actual response by the churches has been pathetically inadequate. Here, as in many other fields, we in the British churches have almost everything to learn from America. It ministers to British nationalism to think of the American churches as

preoccupied with dollars and numbers. The truth seems to be that it is *our* clergy who, for a variety of reasons, have to carry burdens of administration which deprive them of the leisure required to be careful students and creative pastors. In the States there seems to be a better custom, of releasing ministers for the work of ministry.

The alarming—although, of course, still not numerically very great—incidence of suicide emphasizes our need for fundamental theology, as well as for better pastoral care. It was a coincidence that Mr Foster's death was not separated by many days from the publication of the pamphlet *Ought Suicide to be a Crime?* by a group reporting to the Archbishop of Canterbury.[1] To the question about reforming the law of the land asked in the title, the group answered that people who attempt and fail suicide ought to be treated as sick people, not as criminals. This was a coincidence in terms of time, but the group's expression of a change in Christian feeling was echoed by the general Christian reaction to the news of the tragedy in Oxford. Most Christians today find it impossible to condemn a soul temporarily so sick as to be a suicide. And perhaps even the group did not go far enough in reformulating the attitude of Christian charity. In conversation with the writer one theologian has pointed out that the group's document is unsatisfactory when it comes to discussing *why* Christians should not take their own lives; the report is too much bogged down in untenable philosophizing which originated in Athens rather than on Calvary. To the scholar who advanced this criticism, there is only one fundamental (and conclusive) Christian objection to suicide—'You must not throw away your cross'. And, of course, to make this objection is immediately to add—'there but for the grace of God go others one could name'. Perhaps the required theological rethinking of suicide is analagous to the rethinking needed about the specifically Christian objection to divorce. Intricately difficult questions of church discipline are naturally connected. One's reasons for not denying Christian burial to all suicides are perhaps analogous to one's reasons for not denying Holy Communion to everyone who has remarried after divorce. And all this represents, perhaps, not a 'weakening of the Christian position' but a more faithful submission to the mind of Christ.

Some wider questions are also raised for the day-to-day life of the Christian community in the modern world.

Our religion needs reformation, and not only in connection with the biblical, liturgical and ecumenical movements—the movements which

[1] Church Information Board, 2s. 6d.

we normally have in mind if we speak of 'the Reformation of the twentieth century'. We have seen how these movements by themselves are not enough to cure the spirit of man. If the spirit is sick (and it is surely unarguable that it frequently is in our time), then it needs a deeper cleansing and a deeper strengthening. This is not entirely the same as demanding penitence. There must in truth be a painful turning to the Holy God—a turning regularly renewed. But a conviction is growing in the writer that many Christians today need not so much penitence as courage; not so much exhortation as forgiveness, comfort and assurance; not so much a deepening or a spread of the moral sense as a liberation of the creative instincts; not so much self-examination as self-acceptance. Many Christians, too, need not more fellowship within the Church but more delight in using their skills in the tasks and recreations of the world. In the last FRONTIER Dr Bliss pointed to the disintegration of our society as one cause of suicides, and of course she was right—but, thank God, the world does have some joys still; and some Christians neglect them. Theologians and spiritual counsellors too easily attack 'liberalism' and 'heartiness', forgetting that there is little need today to guard against the excesses of those attitudes, and a crying need to recover their virtues, if a revived religion is not to be itself neurotic. Church leaders—and angry young men—too lightheartedly pile on the enquiries and the challenges, the problems and the duties, when what is needed is tidings of joy. Why is it that the churches in Britain today are both enormously active and enormously depressed?

There is a sickness of the twentieth century, and it is this—despair because of mental illness. The phlegmatic British are usually puzzled by the diagnosis as offered by the Continental existentialists; in theological terms, Bultmann and Tillich seem to be speaking rather hysterically. But that does not mean that we do not display the symptoms of our own sickness in our own societies and our own souls; in theological terms, the fact that Bultmann and Tillich scarcely speak our language does not excuse us from grappling with their message. Inevitably there has been a difference between the Continental, the British, and the American manifestations, but the fact remains that the West, particularly the sensitive and thoughtful *élite* within it, has lost its nerve over the last half century, in a way strikingly similar to the dying stages of the Greek and the Roman worlds. Americans appear to reckon with this fact (e.g. in their attention to Tillich) more effectively than we of Britain, whose imaginations are still too historical, too much preoccupied with our country in its olde and merrie days, and whose spirits

shy away from self-revelation. When the contemporary situation is interpreted to us, it is more often by our dramatists than by our preachers; and our dramatists, when not bawdy, are bitter. For their deep revival, the churches of Britain need nothing so much as to see that the anxiety around them reflects—at a time of unprecedented material hope—a crisis of the human spirit comparable with the despair confronting Paul or Augustine.

In what has been said, no systematic assessment of Bishop Nelson or Mr Foster has been implied. Some brief, general reflections on the wider situation have been offered by one who was one of Mr Foster's many friends, and who was deeply moved by both tragedies. Whether or not it is wise to say anything in these circumstances must be a matter of personal judgment under correction, which will certainly be forthcoming. All that is clear is that the Christian cause meant more than anything else in this life to both Bishop Nelson and Mr Foster in their many good, creative years.

V. A. DEMANT

Two Kinds of Faith

Part of a sermon preached in Christ Church, Oxford

ALL who knew Michael Foster well, and mostly those who found their Christian faith through him or had it strengthened, were aware that his own faith—which he came to lateish in life after a period of agnosticism—was maintained only through a recurring struggle against practical doubt, and this is what made him such a wonderful kindler of faith in others. There are two types of Christians who have conveyed to their fellowmen the resources of Christian faith, and the Lord uses both types in His own way. One type seems favouritely blessed by Almighty God; their faith is a steady, unruffled, strong assurance which carries them across the dark patches leaving no deep spiritual scars. Such were in modern times men like John Wesley and Archbishop William Temple. The other type is used by God, almost unmercifully it seems to us; they cannot relinquish the faith to which they have committed themselves, but for them it is not one of 'the consolations of religion', it is a heroic struggle to hold on with the will to obedience and discipleship, when often their thoughts and feelings seem to say they are God forsaken. John Henry Newman was, I think, one of these, and so was Bishop Charles Gore. These men acquire a seminal and robust kind of certainty, all the stronger for the pressure of practical doubt, especially doubt of their own acceptance by their Lord and Master. Michael Foster was one of these. I was privileged to have his confidence from time to time in moments of deep depression which afflicted him. The roots of that recurring melancholia

were never clear to me or perhaps to him; and it would be impertinent and irreverent to probe too deeply. I can only say that I have a terrible sense of failure, in that I was only able to restore his confidence for limited periods. I think it is a testimony to the depth and reality of his faith that it gave him over and over again a desolating sense that he was betraying it. Of the three theological virtues he had faith and charity in abundance; but somehow there frequently occurred a hitch just where faith spills over into the virtue of hope.

Perhaps, if he had met wider Christian influences after his conversion, he would have been able to see his repeated dejection as part of 'the dark night of the soul', which when first met seems as if it means that God has taken Himself away from us into a far country, but when understood becomes a means of assurance that God holds us in our very being in spite of leaving our thoughts and feelings bereft of a sense of His presence.

I would say that Michael Foster came by a hair's breadth only short of complete sanctity; he had all the marks of holiness but just missed the joy of the saints. Yet, note how the Lord used him. In the two days since he died I, and at least one of my colleagues on the Chapter, have received messages of condolence from people—odd people about town and university dons here and elsewhere—who say that they owe their faith and their soul to him. Isn't it as if, in a way, the Lord sometimes laid upon him the doubt and desolation he was removing from others, like the suffering servant? He was taking their burdens upon himself, and in his great humility frequently thinking that he himself was the castaway. I was about to describe him as a heroic soul, but he would not have liked that, for he tells us in his book *Mystery and Philosophy* that heroism is not a Christian virtue. The heroic man prays: 'Lead me into temptation so that I may test out the power of good in me' he quotes from Bonhoffer. But the Christian prays: 'Lead me not into temptation', the fiery trials which I may not be able to stand. If then we may not call him a heroic soul, we can certainly say that his was a sacrificial life; he gave to others what he could not all the time ensure for himself, namely the assurance that he was accepted of God.

This man endured the Cross in himself; he could have avoided that by relinquishing his commitment to Christ. He was one of those on whom tribulation comes 'because of the Word', as our Lord said in explaining the Parable of the Sower. But, unlike the men whom Jesus there described, Michael never shirked the tribulations by going back when he had once put his hand to the plough. That is how the Lord uses some of his most faithful servants. As for most of the rest of us, for whom our faith is a calm certitude or a shallower and painless contentment, well! we may be thankful that God has used us mercifully, and we have our own kind of ministry. But we are not of very much use to Him; we haven't suffered enough in our faith. We get the blessing which Jacob received without having had to wrestle with the Angel of the Lord.

We must then thank God for this sacrificial life. I would have conventionally said that it has been cut off too soon. But a letter I received corrects me, and I now see with greater insight. It is from a lady in this University, and she puts the matter in a different light. She writes: 'Rather it seems to me that it was a great grace that allowed someone as heavily burdened with unresolved sorrows as Michael Foster was, to continue so courageously and faithfully for so long.'

H. L. ELLISON

Synagogue and Church

ONE of our many modern paradoxes is that at the time when the Church Missions to Jews—probably directly or indirectly the ancestress of all extant Protestant Jewish missions—is humbly and gratefully celebrating her ter-jubilee, the whole conception of such work is being attacked from the Christian side, probably more strongly and intelligently than ever before. Theologically the attack has come from men like Dr Grant and Dr Parkes, and sociologically by Dr R. Niebuhr. Both elements featured in the rather inconclusive debate at the Evanston meeting of the World Council of Churches on whether Christ should be specifically mentioned as the hope of Israel.

There have been vigorous and able replies, especially from certain theological circles in Europe. The findings of the study group at the Ecumenical Institute in Bossey in September 1956, though showing all the weaknesses inherent in a widely representative group working at high pressure, has hardly had the publicity or attention it deserves.

We are making no effort to evaluate the conflicting arguments. Rather by glancing at the criticisms raised by very many Jews, and also by an increasing number of Hebrew Christians, we hope to establish a background against which these arguments may be seen in truer perspective.

There are Jews who have become so integrated into the society in which they live that their only real claim to be Jews is that they are not Christians. If they are converted to Christianity, the purely negative bond that bound them to Jewry has gone. A high proportion of converts are of this type. The positive Jew, however, when he becomes a Christian, considers that he has found the real Hope of his people. He will inevitably reappraise old values, but will not necessarily reject them. It is to such converts we refer, when we write of Hebrew Christians.

In Britain, North America and Western Europe, and especially in Israel, the names 'mission' and 'missionary' are felt to be such a liability today that various efforts are being made to find other titles for the work being done. It is doubtful, however, whether the Jew considers that the skunk smells any sweeter under the new name. The missions are particularly distressed by the growing opposition of many Hebrew Christians to these names, even though many of them were converted

through the work of missions. Incidentally, the attitude of many Christians to the convert from Judaism is lamentable. Slander and misunderstanding are the almost inevitable lot of the Jewish convert; his motives are suspect by both Jews and Christians. This attitude on the part of Christians suggests a cynical acknowledgment that the life and history of the Church make the conversion of a Jew so miraculous as to be suspect.

The objections of the Hebrew Christian always begin with the methods used. He does not refer to a certain dishonest or lunatic fringe of individuals and societies, which are not a phenomenon peculiar to the Jewish field. The Jew normally knows full well that the Christian Church repudiates them almost as wholeheartedly as he does himself. Though the Hebrew Christian may object to this or that specific practice, he is normally thinking more of sins of omission than of commission, of the undue narrowing of the area of impact. This is due to the lack of resources, qualitative even more than quantitative. So far from Jewish missions being the spearhead of the Church's witness to the Jews they have all too often been an opiate for her conscience. It is the knowledge that the mission, however it may be called, has normally very little real backing from its church, and that it is liable to be deprecated by high ecclesiastics, when they meet on friendly terms with their opposite numbers in Jewry, that makes the educated Jew so resentful. While he is increasingly willing to agree with Schalom ben Chorin of Israel that its very nature forces the Church to be missionary, he would appreciate and respect her the more, if she really looked on Jewry as worthy of her best.

The Hebrew Christian soon reveals that he has deeper reasons for his dislike. These are bound up with the historic development of the Church. One element which he particularly dislikes is what might be described as 'Catholicism'[1] i.e. the desire for internal and theological conformity; the other element is nationalism. 'Catholicism', with its anti-Judaism, has always striven for either the assimilation of Jewry by conversion (or murder!) or its sealing off by expulsion or the ghetto, physical or social. Nationalism, with its even worse anti-semitism, has carried the hateful process even further. The Hebrew Christian is bitterly aware that these tendencies are far from dead in the Church, even in circles in which pathological outbreaks like the Dreyfus case or Nazism were condemned out of hand. Let us take one example. It has all too long been

[1] Mr Ellison seems to be adding to the many meanings of the word 'Catholicism'. His shafts are not directed at those who affirm: 'I believe in the Catholic Church,' but at 'the spirit that yearns for conformity of spirit.'

taken for granted that Christians have a *right* to proclaim the Gospel by word and literature to those who are uninterested or hostile. Refusal to listen and active opposition especially by the Jew are all too often attributed to fanatical hardness of heart. Modern liberalism is a frail plant of recent growth and historic memories are long. It would come as a shock to many zealous Christians to realize how many Jews in Britain, even today, conceive that they are under compulsion to lend half an ear to Christian propaganda, lest they be discriminated against.

This is the reason why (in spite of the hatred felt by the hyper-orthodox) Jews as a whole had a fairly tolerant attitude to Protestant missions and missionaries in Roman Catholic and Orthodox East and South-East Europe. In these areas the missionary was himself a member of a minority, sometimes almost as despised as the Jew. He could put no pressure on the Jew: if he was listened to, it was because he attracted. Hence too the modern attitude towards the missionary in Israel; he is there by tolerance and the Jew is proud to show him true tolerance.

The spirit that yearns for conformity of spirit looks on schismatic, heretic and Jew as primarily something to be conquered and obliterated. It is therefore indifferent to any excellencies they may show. There have been missionaries who have shown such knowledge of and respect for the treasures of Judaism and of Jewish national life that they in turn were loved and respected. The average missionary, however, has been caught in a vicious circle. He has been brought up in the outlook of a dominant Christianity, for which Judaism was something to be saved *from*, not something to be saved *in*; therefore a knowledge of it was mainly desired as a help in polemics. When through personal contacts he began to realize that it was something much greater than he had imagined, he has seldom been able to find time for the necessary study of it. The measure of this failure is seen in the fact that the Church's witness to the Jews has repeatedly led to a better understanding at large of Jewry's sufferings, but seldom of Judaism itself.

The frequent lack of understanding by the missionary is of little importance compared to the Church's ignorance. A far fuller synthesis of religion and man's social obligations has been achieved in Judaism than in any form of Christianity, except in some small, persecuted sects. The Church has long tolerated or even sanctioned practices that can claim no religious value or purpose. The average Jew has realized how much the Church has not shown, and so presumably has not possessed, of truths which Judaism has preserved; as a result he has rejected Christ for the Church's sake. He looked at the Church and saw her rent

asunder by questions which for anyone brought up in the traditions of Judaism are and remain meaningless. In the Church's disunity he saw the denial of all she claims for her Lord. In the Christian's tacit assumption of superiority to Judaism he could see merely pride and insolent ignorance.

The Hebrew Christian feels this even more. For love of Christ he has been willing to accept the Church with all her failings—indeed it was very often in the love and understanding of individual Christians that he first saw Christ reflected—but then he has been called on all too often to relinquish all the wealth of his past, to adapt the whole rhythm of his life to a completely new framework, and to welcome values which to him are meaningless or worse. At the same time the maintaining of old customs is apt to be considered as a sign of incipient heresy.

It is easy enough from these and many other faults to infer that the Church has no mission to the Jew, but to do so would be to commit spiritual suicide. The Church's message is not the superiority of Christianity, or the wrongness of other systems, but the uniqueness of Jesus Christ.

It is easy too to accept missionary apologetics and to explain the present position by the Divine mystery of Israel's 'blindness in part' (Romans xi: 25). We must take Divine mysteries seriously, but they normally work out by very human means. The history of the Church's relationship to the Jews explains a good deal in Israel's 'blindness'.

Above all we must not be led into thinking that it is merely a matter of techniques. Jewish missions are what the Church has made them. The continuing rejection of Christ by the Jew, mainly because He has been insufficiently seen in the Church, is one of the greatest challenges to the Church. So long as the Church fails to embrace in practice the whole revelation of God, so long Judaism will have to bear witness to part of it. We cannot here consider how the Church is to regain this part of her heritage in Christ, whether by a humbler and more sympathetic study of Judaism, by a greater understanding of the Hebrew Christian, by a turning from tradition and custom to her Lord, or by all three. If, however, she realizes that her own fuller knowledge of the Lord is bound up with the Jew's sharing of it, it will change the whole understanding of her mission to the Jew, for the Israel of the old covenant remains a people of God without whom the people of the new covenant will never reach its goal. Paul has already told us in advance that the receiving of Israel will mean 'life from the dead' (Romans xi: 15).

PAUL OESTREICHER

Germany: A Church Divided

By kind permission of 'The Bridge'

IT has been my privilege, being an Anglican of German birth, to work during the past year in the German Church holding the post of assistant pastor (*pfarrvikar*) in the parish church of Ruesselsheim. Having as a student at Bonn University studied recent German church history, which amounted to a study of the *Kirchenkampf*, I naturally spent a good deal of time assessing the fruits of the Church's struggles during the years of Nazi rule as they are manifested today.

Readers will be acquainted with the very obvious success of many aspects of the Church's life in the German Federal Republic. In fact the outward growth of the Church and its most impressive (and very wealthy) structure can stand comparison with any aspect of Germany's so-called 'miraculous' economic recovery.

But this picture completely hides the deep division that tears the Church asunder. The picture is by no means rectified by simply believing that beside the successful Church of Western Germany there is the suffering, persecuted Church of the Communist East.

If we go back to 1945 we find a minority in the Church who had stood out against the 'German Christians' and the State. To a great extent the leadership of the Church fell to them, while that other minority, the 'German Christians' ceased to exercise further authority. The vast majority, who had 'sat on the fence', fell in line, as such majorities usually do, but it was soon evident that the penitence spoken of in the Stuttgart Declaration—penitence for all that Germany had done and that Christians in Germany had failed to do—was not shared by the Church as a whole in any far-reaching sense. In this non-acceptance of corporate penitence, it seems to me, lie the deep causes of much that has followed.

After the war all the church provinces came together in a federation called the *Evangelische Kirche in Deutschland*. Its main convictions were those gained in the struggle against Hitler—ecumenical convictions that true faith in Jesus Christ and obedience to Him in brotherhood,

not any particular set of doctrines, are the marks of a Christian. However, the restoration of traditional German life in a context of great prosperity had the effect of so weakening these insights that the cry of the orthodox Lutherans was soon heard, urging the need for 'purity' and combining this with the traditional interpretation of Luther's teaching on submission to the State.

It is on this issue that the Church in Germany is at the moment (in human terms) hopelessly divided. As what most people would consider a high-church Anglican, committed to ecumenism as something that is of the *esse* of a church seeking its catholicity, I found it relatively easy to understand and to worship with those Germans in East and West who see the faith in terms of obedience to the living Lord as He is revealed in Holy Scripture. These Christians are by no means untheological in their approach. Yet they have broken with the assumption that a system of theology (i.e. Lutheran exegesis) is the only legitimate basis for the Church's activity. Alas, with their denigration of Lutheran Orthodoxy there goes all too often a denigration of any form of ecclesiastical tradition, and a total lack of understanding for all that is summed up in the 'Liturgical Movement'. Their prophet is Karl Barth, their turbulent and disturbing leader Martin Niemoller, whose courage and undiplomatic passion for the Gospel, translated into action, have not been abated either by his years in prison or by his subsequent positions of authority. In varying degrees these Christians are committed to neutralism in the struggle between Communism and the West, and they stand together in an uncompromising struggle against the remilitarization of Germany, and in particular against nuclear arms in Germany or anywhere else.

It is with the Gospel that men like Professor Gollwitzer and Propst Gruber argue against rearmament, whereas their opponents either reply with theological formulae from the sixteenth century or with directly political argument. Martin Niemoller's recent dramatic challenge to his opponents, 'Refute me with the Gospel of Jesus Christ and I shall recant' has gone unanswered. With deep sorrow I saw again and again how a considerable majority have once more managed to hide behind the screen of traditional orthodoxy, and so evade the challenge of the situation. The central tragedy of West German church life seems to me to be the almost total lack of charity between the two schools of thought. Often enough it would appear as though they had excommunicated each other.

The situation in Communist East Germany is radically different. But

an extensive tour, and conversation with many Christians, convinced me that the Church there is faced with the same spiritual dilemma as in the West. That the State would gladly see the liquidation of all religion need not be said. It does, on the other hand, officially proclaim freedom of religion. If freedom means permission to worship, then it exists. If it means much more (and of course it does) then everything becomes questionable.

A few, very few, clergy accept Communism without question. Some are idealists, others opportunists. Another, and probably the largest, section of clergy are to a greater or lesser degree opponents of the State in which they live, and at heart at one with the traditionalists in the West. To them the West is, by and large, what they admire. Some are openly reactionary: nationalists to whom the Prussian Reich remains an ideal. These the régime seems, paradoxically, to welcome. Their preaching is rarely interfered with. They are in fact what the Communists believe (and therefore want) Christians to be like. They are no danger because they are so easily refuted.

A third section are those who refuse to think in terms of a cold war (even at the theological level!) but who are determined, while giving no blessing to the obvious injustices of the régime, to live as constructive citizens in the new order, witnessing positively to their faith and not complaining if they suffer materially or physically in the process. They have no desire to be in the West and are dedicated to their Christian responsibility in a completely new (but certainly not wholly bad) social order. The position of these Christians is no easy one. By many they are branded as fellow-travellers. To the Communists they are an acute embarrassment—they are all too often ground between the millstones of the cold war in which they refuse to participate. Of them I mention only their literary advocate Johannes Hamel, theological lecturer in Naumburg, whose book, *A Christian in East Germany*, is soon to appear in English (S.C.M. Press).

The situation is complicated by the unpopularity of the régime with many people. Some of these support the Church merely thereby to express their dislike of Communism. For that reason the anti-communist pastor is often enough in a stronger parochial position than the pastor who all too obviously preaches the need to love even the rulers of an unjust State. All this apart, the most significant thing is no doubt that the strong social pressures brought to bear on people, particularly young people, not to go to church have resulted in the practical elimination of nominal churchmanship. Only a few children, for instance, are

being confirmed—but for them and their parents it means a great deal. This cleansing is no doubt God's Will, but it would be cheap in the extreme for us in the West to rejoice at it. We do not have to pay the price.

Much more could be said, particularly about the State's attempts to secularize religious ceremonies, instituting *jugendweihe* for confirmation and *namensgebung* for baptism. All this has led to grave conflicts of conscience. Tragic too, it seems to me, is the position of Bishop Dibelius, whose whole-hearted acceptance of the Western cause and whose total rejection of the East German régime have shocked even conservative Lutherans like Bishop Lilje. He himself is isolated in West Berlin from his own people in Brandenburg whom, understandably, he is not permitted to visit. While completely respecting his integrity, I cannot help regretting that he should appear as the spokesman for the German Church whom he does not, in fact, represent. But then, sad to say, no man could hope to do so today.

I am only too well aware that in this thumbnail sketch of the Church in Germany I have had to make statements which need qualification. Rather than be over-scrupulous, I have not held back with my own judgments. I hope that in doing so, I have not unjustly hurt any of my German fellow-Christians whom I have learnt to love so much. If this article will in some measure help us to pray more intelligently for the needs of our German brethren—whose prayers we need as much as they do ours—then it has served its purpose.

The Guardian of Unity

Charity must be the guardian of existing unity . . . and the mainspring of the unity to be built up. . . . Charity will incline us to wish very warmly that our separated brethren may understand by degrees the part played in the way of salvation by the means of grace which are at our disposal. At the same time we must never lose sight of the fact that the best way of convincing them is to give them, with God's help, a living example of the profit we find in putting these means into practice. In setting up this as our object to aim at, charity will also inspire in us a delicacy of approach enabling us humbly to avoid even the appearance of pharisaism. Here lies the true field for an eirenic approach in our exchanges and friendly discussions, for the peace which is expressed by this approach is indeed one of the finest fruits precisely of this charity. . . .

Approaches to Christian Unity (p. 219)
by C. J. Dumont, O.P. (Darton, Longman & Todd, 25s.)

Letters to the Editor

DEAR SIR,

I have read your editorial 'Defence without Destruction' with great interest.

Your view that the best way to get peace is to maintain the capability to strike second is, of course, the basis of this country's defence policy. But FRONTIER is a Christian journal!

You know about nuclear weapons. You probably agree with me that we would never be justified in using them, But if you know this how can you, as a Christian, threaten to use them?

It is interesting to know that Christians were involved in these matters at the Worcester Conference and shared the burden of deciding them. Those of us who were not there will share the burden of the decisions, whatever they were.

But isn't our way clear? There are many of us who are not pacifists who now revolt against the manufacture and threatened use of nuclear weapons. If the Conference decided we must keep them then, alas, our burden will be to redouble our efforts to get rid of them.

Yours faithfully,

JACK BOWLES

23 Colehill Lane,
London, SW6.

DEAR SIR,

Please allow me one correction to your editorial comment on my article in the Winter 1959 number. You say that 'it would be strange indeed if we had to choose between a religion for individuals and a religion for social beings, which is what Dr Parkes seems to say'. I don't really say this, though I cannot pretend that what I meant is any less strange. What the historical facts appear to me to demand is that we recognize that, since every man is both person (a better word than individual) and social being, the Church needs to find a way to bring together for every man the insights now separated between Judaism and Christianity. We don't have to choose between them. We all need both.

As a historian I do not find it true that 'it is the whole man who is met' in Christianity. If it were true, then the political history of the last fifteen centuries would be very different from what it has been. In the same way, if Christianity met the whole man, the 500-year-old story of scientific discovery and of humanism would be very different. We go on asserting (as, for example, the article by R. K. Orchard in the same number) this universal Lordship of Christ over the whole of life, but we have no historical evidence for it. In fact the article in question admits that the Lordship is not over the whole of life by saying that in political and such matters Christians have to receive as well as give (p. 251). What can be the source of the gifts others must give us if the whole of truth is already received by us in Christ? This is why, as you rightly say, I fervently believe in the Trinity, though not in the superb manner of another of your contributors, who refers to the third person of the Trinity as its 'continuing worker'. I believe *all* the three members of the Trinity speak directly to man, and that *all* of them are still at work. From my point of view, that would be the source of the gifts Mr Orchard's Christians need. I don't want to do him an injustice, but it looks as though he thinks of his source as outside God's activity.

Yours faithfully,

JAMES PARKES

Church End, Barley,
Royston, Herts.

DEAR SIR,

I have been thinking about what you said in the last FRONTIER on the 're-establishment' of the Church of England. I quite agree we do not want disestablishment in the sense of getting rid of an established church altogether; I agree too that what is needed in England is establishment *à la mode de* Scotland. But I don't agree that it is the Church of England that should be 're-established' in this way; what should be so 're-established' is the united Church we all ought to be seeking in penitence and with all deliberate speed.

Yours faithfully,

J. E. PATER

157 Coombe Road,
Croydon.

(*In principle, yes. In practice, how?* Ed.)

ALAN BOOTH

A Lay Vocation

JOHN EDWARDS: 1904-1959

'NOW I shall take you along and introduce you as a fresher to the student chairman of the Leeds University Student Christian Movement—only be a little careful what you say to him. His name is John Edwards.' The exhortation to caution was being properly addressed, unless you were prepared for the company of a young man who was already out on the frontiers of the church, and was both intellectually and spiritually impatient of comforting illusions. Where he was living the winds blew bitterly and strong, and he expected his companions to be familiar with weather unsuitable for lazy sunbathing.

At that time he was about to take a degree in Economics, a key to understanding and alleviating the injustices and sufferings of the industrial society of the 1920s. Then he intended to enter the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield, to study theology and prepare for ordination as an Anglican priest. In fact he began his theological course, but his first year of it raised deep questions in his own mind, not as to the validity of the Christian faith but as to whether in the role of an ordained priest he would really find himself on the battlefield where the judgments and mercy of God met the living world of men—or would instead have chosen the easier way.

He was far too rigorous in honesty to underestimate the weight of his decision. His church and friends might doubt his purpose if he turned away from ordination for what for him was a more baffling adventure of faith. His closest friends in the SCM shared his struggles, and he was offered the post of Inter-collegiate Secretary of the SCM in Birmingham for twelve months during which he might see his future road more clearly. At the end of that time his mind was made up—and he withdrew from further theological training to immerse himself in the tough realities of 'secular' life. Beginning as a WEA lecturer and member of the Labour Party, he went on to become Secretary of the Post Office Engineering Union, MP for Blackburn and then Brighouse; Private Secretary to Stafford Cripps, and then one of Attlee's younger men at the Treasury, a leading figure in the Council of Europe and, in

the last year of his life, its President. But the beginning he made in adult education set the style of his approach on all else he undertook. None of his friends can forget the way he would meet them, listen critically to their latest enthusiasm or request, and then set about correcting their perception, deepening and enlarging their thought and insisting just upon those elements of the truth which they had reason to try and avoid. A teacher of people rather than of a subject—did any of us emerge from his formal or informal instruction without an uneasy feeling that we were congenitally facile and superficial?

We may speak fashionably today of 'frontier Christianity'. For John Edwards, in a special way, it was the whole pattern of his life. On the one hand he brought to his business in the world an ascetic discipline and rapidly maturing administrative skill which would undoubtedly have assured him an important place in any future Labour Government. The driving force behind his austere and able mind in this respect was an unrelenting opposition to social injustices and an undeflected patience in working for international reconciliation. But these passions were served by a meticulous attention to the practical and actual, and a loathing of the vaguely pious. 'Now you are speaking like a Christian' he would say a little sourly, when someone took leave of political realities in favour of being high-minded. This was the side of his character that flourished predictably in his long association with Political and Economic Planning (PEP).

So also on the other hand there was the man who talked of his longing to retreat from public life to enjoy long months of prayer and meditation. 'The 'flu was a blessing because I could read all the Epistles of St Paul again, and then had time for *The Affluent Society*.' He was a man invited by a group to talk on Christianity and politics who ended by exploring with them the meaning of Christian mysticism. He was at many a consultation of the ecumenical movement, unsparing of his time and energy, treasuring the friendships of the few who were travelling the same Christian road as himself, painfully aware how distant it seemed from so much of the conventional life of the Church.

The Christian fellowship which meant most to him was perhaps the group of men Dr Oldham drew together from public life, to dine in London of an evening and then talk with freedom of their responsibilities and experience, to see in what way they might better understand the world, their duty, and the Christian faith. 'But for the Christian Frontier Council,' he would sometimes say, 'I would probably be outside the Christian Church.' And thereby he revealed something of the

intensity of the spiritual struggle in which he was immersed to the last. The frontier for him meant that spiritually he had not found where to lay his head. He knew how this moment in history requires the man of faith to struggle in darkness between a self-absorbed church and a self-absorbed world. There is no comfort and much loneliness to be found there.

Another group of friends were the members of the 'Committee on Christian Responsibility for European Co-operation', an *ad hoc* group of European politicians and others with which he was associated almost from the start. Here again he was amongst friends in some hotel in Brussels or Frankfurt or Amsterdam, around a good meal reflected upon in a haze of cigar smoke, in turn sardonic, judicial, deflating or entertaining, superficially destructive yet acting as a catalyst, testing adventurous ideas by concrete experience, at once very British and very much at home.

If it is fashionable to talk of the frontier, he knew how costly it is to live there, where a man is torn apart as he tries to stand where God actually meets men. Anyone who tried to ease that eternal wound by cheap salves got short shrift. But those who knew something of the harshness of the way found a friend who gave them more than ever in his modesty he realized himself.

Britain is castigated by continental countries for her aloofness to the dreams of political and economic integration now current. John Edwards could be astringent amongst his continental colleagues when they seemed to make Britain a scapegoat for their own rivalries or frustrations. Yet it was he whom they elected President of the Council of Europe for this year, and it was a tribute to a man of utter integrity who could be disconcerting because he cared so deeply about Europe's unity. Perhaps no other Englishman at this stage could have been so chosen.

As we stood in the garden of Golders Green crematorium on a sunlit November morning, surrounded by the flowers whose garlands carried their inscriptions in many European languages, we saw not only the men from the Trade Unions and the Labour Party, old colleagues and workmates, but also the tired faces of men off the night ferry from Paris or the Hague or Strasbourg, come to pay much more than a formal tribute to one whose strange victory he would have been the first to underestimate, and whose Christian testimony was the more powerful because of its almost fearful modesty. At last the debt and the love we owed could be acknowledged.

PHILIP MAIRET

Evolution and Prophecy

IT was not possible for the Jesuit father Teilhard de Chardin, during his lifetime, to publish the books containing his essential vision of cosmogony and evolution. He could not have done so without breaking his vow of obedience to the religious order to which he had devoted his life. And since his death has released his works from that embargo, they have been enthusiastically acclaimed by many distinguished writers and scientists. Some continuing official resistance to the propagation of this wonderfully inspiring philosophy of evolution—especially so soon after the cautious Papal admission of the scientific evidence for man's 'pre-human' ancestry—raises an interesting old question in a new form, which we will consider later. But first let us take a brief look at the theory which Père Teilhard propounds with such passionate and moving enthusiasm, as well as scientific competence.

He was an undeniably competent—as well as a practically productive—archaeologist, and had very great biological learning. The initial assumption underlying the whole of his vision of things is that in the last analysis nothing is really 'dead' in the sense that we have to regard everything as dead for the purposes of our mathematico-physical analyses of objects. In the world as he conceives it, every objective, material entity, from the highest biological organisms down to the molecular and sub-molecular levels of existence, is credited with some degree (however rudimentary and unlike what we experience as consciousness) of subjective or 'inner' being. There are ample grounds for such a supposition: we ourselves are, after all, material structures of the stuff of the rest of the universe, and we possess an inner life. We can also trace a comparable subjective awareness in, e.g., animals (*pace* Descartes) and in plants. That some degree of pre-conscious 'interiority' should extend, if more and more dimly, right down through the large bio-chemical molecules to the sub-atomic realm is, at least, compatible with that belief in the unity and homogeneity of nature which (*pace* Russell) is a foundation of the scientific standpoint itself—and, in a different way, of the religious standpoint also.

That conception is in itself no novelty: Pierre Teilhard's originality is in his correlation of this 'inwardness' or proto-consciousness with the progressive unification and (as he calls it) 'complexification' of the

entities, pre-living and living, that have merged in the evolution of terrestrial life, as this process can be traced from the archaeological and other data. This immense task of analysis and comparative biology is performed with erudition and insight that have impressed many experts; and with a power of exposition and illustration most enlightening for less highly-informed readers. The argument that the purpose—in any case the manifest outcome—of the cosmogony is the evolution of an ever more comprehensive consciousness has never yet been sustained with such a magisterial grasp of the relevant scientific facts. And, from the standpoint of this elaborate analysis of the origins of man, the author gives us a new and arresting view of the unprecedented situation now being attained by a humanity that has become (almost suddenly) unified by global communications and instantaneous exchanges of information. There is now a world-embracing sphere of a developing, *conscious* interchange—which Teilhard calls 'the Noosphere' by which the evolutionary process on earth is becoming, as it were, cephalized, developing something analogous to a unified common intelligence.

It is here that the reverend scientist's Christology appears in a symbol—that of a point of mental and spiritual convergence of the noospheric life. He calls it 'the point Omega'; and this, as the reader can construe for himself, is the consummation of the 'Alpha' which was there from the beginning—the Power which then and throughout the whole cosmic process is working to bring the creation to its ever clearer consciousness in Man. One might say it was the Light which was before all worlds, and without which nothing was made that is made.

It amounts, indeed, to a grandiose illustration, in terms of contemporary knowledge, of the creational aspect of the Second Person of the Holy Trinity. Since the Christian faith is of all religious visions the one that is most committed to a historical as well as a transcendent fulfilment, I do not see why this magnificent effort of a Christian scientist, to deal with the world-transmutation by science in the spirit of prophecy, should not be welcomed with more than approval by all Christian intellectuals. If this is not Christian thinking for the 'space age', who else is doing anything comparable with it? Why should it have been received with resistance, and even suppression?

Two things may be said about this. First, the reaction of embarrassment or opposition does not arise, strictly speaking, from the Christian mind as such. It appears in the minds of individuals with certain

responsibilities for organs of the visible Church, who have their own reasons, not altogether or always groundless, for distrusting the effects of a work of this intellectual depth and range, which they do not themselves feel capable of evaluating. Such conservatism is mainly pragmatic and defensive; it will not prevent those who are able to respond to prophecy on this plane, from responding to it. Ultimately, it is of little importance.

But behind this there is a more serious difficulty. The nature of it is indicated by Pierre Teilhard's admission that his exposition gives no explicit treatment to the problem of evil, which every religion deals with in one way or another. For when one meditates upon the cosmogony as a process in Time, the 'evils' fall into place as merely functional; on so long a view they seem of no more importance than do the shavings under a workman's bench compared with the work in progress upon it. To view the world in this perspective is to survey the interactions of vast aggregates of individuals without regard to any individual as such. All religion, on the other hand, from the most primitive shamanism up to Christianity itself, is concerned first and last with the individual person—to communize and universalize him, indeed, but to do so in and through his own individual being.

He was of course aware of this; it was one reason why he wished his cosmogony to be read as a strictly scientific treatise. Yet he cannot keep his Christian belief out of his cosmic perspective, if only because this was integral with the inspiration of it. All the aspects of the matter cannot be treated in the same book, and it would not be very difficult to show where, in his account of things, the element of personal transmutation is clearly implied. But it is a live question whether Christian faith does not only authorize, but even require, at this juncture, an extensive effort such as this book represents, to interpret the meaning of the complete alteration in the situation of mankind which has been brought about by what Teilhard calls the noosphere.

For after all, Christianity is *the* religion which has to make sense of Time and of History; it is the Christianized peoples who are responsible for the developments which have linked all the families of mankind together, given them a common language of science and mobilized them in pursuit of the same practical ambitions. Irresistibly as this movement is impelled by the material advantages that it distributes ever more lavishly and widely, its gains are paid for by practical dislocations and psychic disruptions of life. As Teilhard says: 'It is impossible to accede to a fundamentally new environment without experiencing the

inner terrors of a metamorphosis.' And these are not at all likely to decrease—on the contrary. It is by no means inconceivable that men might lose the faith to fulfil their destiny. If we should fail to discern human purpose and meaning in this progress, if it were interpreted only in terms of economic welfare or technological pride, still worse if it took on the aspect of an ineluctable fate which man has brought upon himself and cannot dominate, is there not danger of refusal and regression?

> 'Having once known the taste of a universal and durable progress, we can never banish it from our minds any more than our intelligence can escape from the space–time perspective it has once glimpsed.
>
> 'If progress is a myth, that is to say, if faced by the work involved, we can say: "What's the good of it all?" our efforts will flag. With that the whole of evolution will come to a halt—because *we are evolution.*'

Nevertheless, the author's belief is that evolution will go on; that humanity will discover and reach a higher form of existence. What has been said here can give no sufficient idea of the depth and richness of his exposition. But there is already a good English translation of his principal work, *The Phenomenon of Man* (Collins, 25s.), and that of another, *Le Mileau Divan*, is soon to appear. It is safe to say that here is a thinker whose contribution cannot be ignored, and perhaps least of all by those who strive to vindicate their Christian faith in social thought and action.

Prayer and Action

If the faith which does not result in action is not a sincere faith, the prayer which is unaccompanied by effort at moral betterment will also be to some extent an insincere prayer. In particular, prayer for Christian unity would only be hypocritical did it not lead Christians, of whatever allegiance, to emulate each other in fidelity to the commandments and counsels of our Lord.

For us who have specially at heart the tremendous cause of Christian unity the season of Lent ought therefore to be a time of grace because a time of purification. The Church making use of St Paul's advice reminds us in her liturgy on the first Sunday of this season: 'We entreat you not to offer God's grace an ineffectual welcome. . . .'

Approaches to Christian Unity (p. 45)
C. J. Dumont, O.P. (Darton, Longman & Todd, 25s.)

PIERRE BENIGNUS

French West Africa: 1959

IMPRESSIONS FROM A JOURNEY

READING my friend Marc-André Ledoux's article[1] again though it is only two years old, I am astonished at the rate of development.

My one firm conclusion is that it is no use trying to understand Africans in terms of our own conceptions which are, consciously or unconsciously, more or less logical and Cartesian. Understanding, in that sense, involves judgment on a world composed of emotion. There is a logic in it, but one different from our own, and the act of judgment is resented by our African friends. Maybe they are too sensitive and their sense of dignity is different from ours. No matter: they are what they are, and to try and understand them in a Western sense of the word makes any real contact impossible in advance. The need is to feel with them.

The political frontiers imposed on West Africa correspond neither to ethnographical boundaries nor to anything in the contemporary scene. The only difference is between French and English speaking Africans. As the new states press onwards with their educational programmes, that difference will be accentuated. But there is also a great need and longing for African unity. Africans see no contradiction in these two aims.

In 1958 France offered to establish a Community of a new kind throughout what was once the French Empire. On September 28 of that year a Referendum on this offer was held. A year later to the day, on September 28, 1959, a delegation came to Paris to open discussions about the transfer of powers from the Community to the Federation of Mali in West Africa. In December the Executive Council of the Community agreed to immediate negotiations for Mali's independence and the Community was established. These dates give an impression of the unaccustomed and unforeseeable speed of African evolution.

In the Referendum on the offer to establish the Community, Madagascar and all Black Africa answered 'yes' almost unanimously, except for Guinea whose 'no' was also almost unanimous. Internationally this 'no' was a momentous victory for liberalism: for Africans it was an experiment to be closely followed. The Republic of Guinea, in this like France, developed under the high authority of her leader and, ever increasingly, under that of the Party, a veritable totalitarian religion of community. African independence and the alliance with Ghana are real enough, but not so intensely real as the Party. It stands firm while the power of chiefs

[1] 'French West African Colonies and Christianity' by Marc-André Ledoux, FRONTIER, January 1958.

and religious authorities is a thing of the past. Understanding with Liberia and Ghana may involve difficulties of language, and it is interesting to note that Guinea recognizes French and English as the only obligatory foreign languages.

While the machinery of the Community is being fixed in place, two strong tendencies known as 'federal' and 'confederal', have come into prominence. The confederal party (Senghor and Modibo Keita in Mali) works for independence, instead of the existing autonomy, within a Commonwealth in French form. The federal party (Houphouet-Boigny and the *Conseil de l'Entente*) strives for a real working federation, regarding independence as something out-of-date and useless.

Some words do not have the same meaning in Africa as in France. In France they may be precise and legalistic, but in Africa they take on a mystical meaning. . . . *Le ministère de la France d'Outre-Mer* has been legally abolished, but *le Secretariat de la Communauté* is still a weighty organization. Even with the best will it is hard for an African not to think that some of the real power of the members has been given up to the Community; we too easily forget that the best legal solution may not be the best *ad hoc* solution for Africa now.

Progress is not quick on all fronts. Though the Community has been functioning, or coming into being, for a year now, the personal prestige of de Gaulle is the only firm link holding it together. One must, moreover, note that the Constitution gives him very great powers, 'all decisions being taken by him at the conclusion of the meeting of the Executive Council . . .'

The Community has its machinery, but its future does not depend on that. The differences in understanding of the meaning of the very essence of the Community are great. Is it a fender whose shape can be altered and at need made stronger? Is it an end or only a stage?

For, wonderful creation though it is, this Community might fall to pieces under certain strains. In North Africa, the meeting at Bamako in 1957 of the *Parti du Rassemblement Démocratique Africain* was the first occasion on which African leaders had broached the Algerian problem. And de Gaulle is not slow to feel this. Financially Algeria is a heavy burden on the Community, but psychologically it is even heavier. Africa is a unity.

The last meeting of the Executive Council of the Community held at Saint Louis was of capital importance. The official recognition of Mali, though late, puts an end to a period heavy with uncertainty. The declarations of General de Gaulle, declarations that leave no opening for more than one interpretation, lead to the conclusion that the Community will undergo an indispensable evolution. The form of Mali's independence is now being worked out. Internationally Mali will certainly be a sovereign state but this independence neither prevents co-operation nor breaks friendship.

We must rejoice greatly at this evolution. It has been made possible by the liberalism and realism of the General, but it has also been favoured by the present state of North African problems. The approaching independence of Mali will weigh upon this situation and will certainly be followed by several other developments more quickly than some people think: Madagascar, etc. . . .

If *independence* remains a mystic force, it is none the less feared. While desperately seeking independence Africa fears at the same time a dictatorial hardening of certain heads of governments. If Mali can offer a haven of grace and peace in the uncertain months to come, it will be a pole of

attraction; then liberty in the Christian sense of the word will be able to survive and will not be merely an electoral or governmental *leitmotiv*, empty of all real meaning. Economics, in the sense of the harmonious development of the economies of the African regions, can and should then be objective number one, for it alone can prevent the clash of tribal nationalisms.

Against this background how does the Church of Christ stand in French-speaking West Africa? The weak points, which are noticed everywhere, certainly exist: nationalism, ill understood, can receive an evangelical baptism though it sometimes remains tribal, as recent events in the Gold Coast have proved. The problem of the meeting of the Crescent and the Cross is too often put in the wrong terms when it is not simply ignored. But Islam is increasingly a very present reality and one which the Church in Africa cannot properly face without understanding it better. This brings in its train the question of Africanizing evangelization, but not, of course, the Gospel itself. Here a deep question of the meaning of the Church is at stake: for the Church is not just an African community to be managed by Africans. Another danger is the gap developing between highly-educated Africans and some of their less educated pastors.

But there are bright spots too. The Churches of Africa are not a myth, and the independence of the African Protestant churches from the missions and mother churches is an ever increasingly firm reality. The autonomy granted by the Paris Mission to the Church of the Cameroons (1957), Madagascar (1958) and soon to be granted in Togoland and Gaboon, teach an important lesson. In each of these cases the spirit is the same in that the missionaries become the servants of the African Church, but local variations are of essential importance. Perhaps Togoland will need a different relationship to Paris from that best suited to the Cameroons. Newcomers to independence can be guided by the experience of the first to receive it. Each church is a member of the Church of Christ, but it is also the Church of Togoland, the Cameroons, etc. There lies the sign of life. The situation must be kept fluid, and we must be prepared even for fundamental alterations in this or that constitution; but 'working together in obedience' is a Grace. Things to cause anguish have happened in the Cameroons recently, but these things have also shown the fundamental sense of responsibility on the part of the leaders of the Church in the Cameroons towards their missionary brothers.

Progress towards spiritual unity must continue and increase. Already there are important advances such as the near hope of a common theological faculty and a joint search to meet the challenge of Islam.

At the beginning of 1960, have we the right to stand in judgment on the churches of black Africa, emphasizing some of their terribly human traits? Should we not rather feel our 'togetherness' in this field that is part of the Kingdom of God? Politically and socially everything is in motion, so who can judge what the West Africa of tomorrow will be? As I make ready to go back to Africa, I would say once more that everything is possible for the Church of Christ in black Africa, if she knows how to be obedient and to listen to what is required from her.

JOHN B. WYON

Why do people have so many babies?

A RAPID fall in death rates of developing countries, without a corresponding fall in birth rates, is the basic cause of their present population problems. As proved public health measures are increasingly applied, it is almost certain that death rates will fall still further, leading to even greater rates of population increase. There is no doubt that less selfish distribution of this world's goods would stave off the day of reckoning, but postponement is no ultimate solution. Unless birth rates fall, or death rates rise, our children will deal with thousands of millions, where we deal with hundreds of millions, of undernourished and starving human beings. If we wish to continue to protect human beings from premature death there is no escape from the necessity to reduce birth rates to balance the lowered death rates. While fully recognizing the need to improve production and distribution of necessities, this discussion is concerned with the problem of how to lower birth rates.

Those who are seeking means to reduce fertility of whole populations can adopt one of two main attitudes. The first is to assume that the solution lies in a frontal attack through family planning programmes; the second way is to attempt to understand the causes of fertility, in the reasonable hope that a better understanding of causes may lead to acceptable and effective methods of control. These efforts are likely to clear the air. A better understanding of the nature of the problem is the first step to a clear decision on what to do or to permit.

The history of research into ill-health is instructive in connection with the problem of high birth rates. The search for causes of diseases would never have got as far as it has unless men had been willing to consider remote possibilities. As a result, men were amazed to find that rat-fleas transmit plague, body lice spread typhus, impure water causes typhoid and cholera, and cattle pass on tuberculosis. Many other apparently bizarre relations between man and his environment are now established knowledge.

On the basis of present knowledge it is probably as difficult to guess correctly the main causes of high birth rates as it was a hundred years

ago to guess the main cause of malaria. In those days people thought it was caused by bad air. They had quinine, just as we have contraceptives, but no one had thought of suspecting the mosquito. Mosquito control is the basis of modern highly effective malaria control. Treatment of cases is now only a poor second. Broad research into the several causes of tuberculosis has resulted in far fewer cases. In the same way high birth rates probably have several important main causes or determinants. Present low birth rates in Western countries give solid grounds for hoping that birth rates in other countries may fall: the problem is how to accelerate what may be a natural but slow process.

Many questions need to be raised which, when answered, will reveal the physical, biological, cultural, economic and spiritual determinants of birth rates. Somewhere in the answer lies the solution of those population problems which are mainly caused by excessively high birth rates. Organization of family planning facilities is almost certainly only a part of the answer.

The basic question that needs answering is: why do people have so many babies? The following subsidiary questions are aimed at answering the main one.

> How do ordinary people in Asia, or elsewhere, view their own locally growing population? Are the growing numbers of individual family groups viewed as an asset or as a liability? Do rural peasants in fact see any point in having a small family?
>
> Who has the most powerful word in deciding whether or not to have more children? Is it the husband, wife, other leading figures in the family, religious, caste or tribal group? Or is it mainly a question of fashion?
>
> To what degree, by what methods, and by what types of people is family planning already practised among the peoples who now have high birth rates? What are the trends of such practices?
>
> If family planning is considered, what are the blocks, and what are the aids, to getting hold of and acting on knowledge of birth control methods?
>
> What is the effect of prolonged breast feeding, or other biological factors, on fertility? Surprisingly enough there are still considerable unknown areas in the biology of human reproduction.
>
> Is high young-child mortality a direct cause of high birth rates?
>
> Just what were the factors which caused people in Europe and their offshoots to start having small families in the nineteenth century? How long had those factors been active before the majority succeeded in having small families? The 1846 famine in Ireland and the revolutionary laws on land inheritance in France may have been decisive in those two countries.
>
> If effective factors can be identified and manipulated in the desired direction how long will it take to detect any effect on fertility, even under well controlled conditions?

Japan, India, the Caribbean area and the USA are the chief sites of present day field-research on family size and family planning, but only

a small proportion of it is consciously directed towards finding out the basic causes of the birth rate. A recent study in Puerto Rico by Hill, Stycos and Back was a well designed series of sociological studies and an educational experiment. The authors tried to answer the question: why is it that in Puerto Rico the birth rate has not yet started to fall perceptibly when the majority of people say they want small families and there is a well developed system of family planning clinics? The authors conclude that in Puerto Rico couples do not start practising family planning until they have from three to five children, depending on the educational level; that the relative importance of family planning is not high in relation to other values; that the birth control clinics are directed almost wholly towards women in a strongly male-dominated society; and that effective communication between spouses is lacking. An important negative finding was that in Puerto Rico the Roman Catholic teaching on birth control is of little practical importance as a barrier to the practice of family planning.

This Study has pioneered a way into the difficult territory of some of the social determinants of action in family planning. It is a pity that it did not investigate other possibly fundamental causes of the birth rate. In particular it did not attempt to find out how the people themselves view the increasing population, nor did it examine how the Puerto Rican situation is modified by the possibility of migration to the mainland USA.

The next steps to be taken to solve the population problem are clear in principle, but a great deal of work is needed to clarify them in detail. Two lines of action are called for now.

In order to achieve a long term result through a logical plan of campaign, the fundamental need is for the most exact possible knowledge of the factors which cause parents to desire or to permit large families. This requires highly directed and co-ordinated research by persons trained in biology, ecology and public health, psychology and sociology, history and economics, religion and politics. Until such research is pressed forward there is every reason to use all the knowledge now available. The second line of action is therefore to realize that the population problem is everyone's problem. We sink or swim together. Anyone who takes the trouble can acquaint himself with the facts of the population problem. Such persons are then in a position to take a part in creating the public opinion which will support the leaders in all countries in decisions designed to deal with the problem. Even more important, informed people constitute one force which will cause the

present day and future parents who are, in fact, responsible for bringing children into the world, to think how many children they can adequately support and educate, and how their children will fare when they grow up.

The speed with which adequate solutions may be found cannot be predicted, but the more institutions and persons are devoted to the search the quicker may results be expected. There is also the question, when causes have been found which can be manipulated, whether or not political, religious and other leaders will encourage their application. For one reason or another the leaders may allow over-population to develop rather than countenance effective action. If this situation should arise the people may well take matters into their own hands, just as the Irish have postponed marriage, and many Roman Catholics in the Western world quietly use birth control, sterilization, or even abortion, in spite of secular laws and the official teaching of the Church. Anyone concerned with population must face the fact of the temporary solution found by the people of Japan. To-day there are about two million induced abortions every year in Japan, and about 1,600,000 live births. The leaders of Japan are not happy about this solution to their very pressing population problem, and are working hard for better ways of achieving the same low birth rate. Japan's death rate is now one of the lowest in the world. Meanwhile the people of Japan demonstrably feel even large scale induced abortion to be a better alternative than mass starvation.

Those who lead in spiritual matters have a particular responsibility to be clear and just in any pronouncements which they make. As long as birth rates exceed death rates populations must go on increasing. Consciously or unconsciously man is choosing his own future numbers and the problems those numbers bring. Better knowledge of the factors which cause people in developing countries to have so many babies is the route to a new understanding of human fertility. If this can be achieved there will be solid hope of developing measures which may induce the millions who have the babies to be content with fewer children. There is much evidence that if this prior question of the causes of human fertility can be solved, the problem of how ordinary people may achieve small families by acceptable means will not be so difficult as many imagine today.

THE SKY'S THE LIMIT

A friend writes: '*I value your magazine but not as highly as you would like me to.*'

M. M. THOMAS

The Imperial Idea[1]

THE first book, as the sub-title says, is a study on British power. Power by itself can never be the theme of political history. It is always power moved by an idea, a sense of mission. The word ideology has been used to denote this combination. It is often used to condemn it, on the assumption that the idea is only a smoke-screen to cover the pursuit of naked power. This assumption however is only partly true. For the idea may represent in part at least a real historical mission in the providence of God. In fact, the author's attempt is to tell the story of the interplay of power and idea in British Imperialism in its heyday, and the opposing forces and ideas of nationalism, democracy, socialism, and internationalism which led to its downfall. This he does as a historian with a mastery of a mass of historical material so that even those of us who represent the 'enemies' of the Imperial Idea can understand and even appreciate the dynamics of British Imperialism.

Beginning with Disraeli, the consciousness of the role of British power in world affairs remained the dynamic in the thought and action of the ruling classes of Britain until after the second world war. Rosebery, Curzon, Milner, Balfour, Churchill, Smuts, Amery and a host of others, were proud to call themselves Imperialists. They believed that it was 'the role of the British Empire to lead the world to the true political method, to act as trustee for the weak, and to represent in itself the highest aims of human society'. They developed the Imperial Idea and the Imperial Code and proclaimed them to the world in no uncertain terms. It was their faith that what they *thought* about the role of the British in world affairs was itself a steadying factor in international order. Today, of course, British power is no more so strong; and the Imperial Idea itself has fallen in ruins. Perhaps the Suez episode must be considered the turning point. It proved once and for all that the idea of British Imperialism cannot be revived any more. This is not disproved by the fact that perhaps large sections of the British people may still adhere to the rightness of the Imperial Idea and may feel that the tragedy of Suez was that it was defeated.

From the point of view of Indian nationalism, which contributed a great deal to the weakening of the Imperial Idea, let me make one comment on the theme of the book. British power had a historical mission to fulfil in Asia and Africa, namely to train the peoples under it for democratic government. But the advocates of the Imperialist idea (as defined in this book) never seemed to have taken that mission seriously. They conceived of the mission as bringing order and good government to 'the

[1] *The Imperial Idea and its Enemies.* By A. P. Thornton. (Macmillan & Co. Ltd., London, 1959. Pp. 370. 30s.) *The Ugly American.* A Novel by William J. Lenderer and Eugene Berdick. (Victor Gollancz. London, 1959. 16s.)

lesser breeds without the Law'; and, as these 'breeds' were incapable of being trained for self-government within any conceivable period, they thought of British domination over them as more or less permanent. Therefore, according to them the security and permanence of British power was the primary consideration of British policies.

On the other hand, there were others (who may be called Liberal Imperialists to distinguish them from the diehards who are given the name Imperialists in this book) who from the very first sought not only to bring good government, but also to prepare the peoples for self-government. These looked forward to the time of the transfer of power to a national government as the fulfilment of the imperial 'mission'. Macaulay in introducing Western education conceived of a time (of course only 'in some future age') when Indians educated in European knowledge might 'demand European institutions', and he added that 'it will be the proudest day in English history'. In the formation of Indian National Congress, Englishmen like Hume played a large part. Even Viceroy Lord Dufferin saw in it something equivalent to Her Majesty's Opposition for India and welcomed it as fulfilling a need in relation to the mission of Imperial Government. The Liberal Imperialists were enthusiastic for social reform and cultural transformation in India.

It is the strong conviction of many Indians that the British rulers who encouraged the emergence of Indian nationalism and its demand for self-governing institutions, and who worked earnestly for the transfer of power to Indian hands, saw more clearly the mission of British power in India than the Imperialists. That British Imperialism, which saw in nationalism only an 'enemy' of its underlying idea, badly

misinterpreted the historical mission of Britain. When power in India came under the influence of the Imperial Idea it gave first priority to considerations of British security and permanence. It not only ceased to advocate democratic changes in the traditional structure of society, but it allied itself with the worst elements of that structure, and even began to undo national unity by exploiting communal differences. Had it not been for the so-called 'enemies' of Imperialism, the advocates of the Imperial Idea would have betrayed the mission of Britain in many parts of the world and destroyed its fulfilment.

It was the task of nationalism in Asia and Africa, in alliance with Liberal Imperialists, to save and put on an indigenous basis the principles of liberal democracy and unity which the West had introduced. Where Asian and African nationalism has forgotten this task and become an opponent not only of Western Imperialism but also of Western values it too has betrayed its mission. The Liberal Imperialists of Britain, and Asian and African nationalism, rather than the diehard adherents of the Imperial Idea, have been the real bearers of the mission of British power in the world.

Imperialists no doubt saw more clearly than the Liberals the positive role of power in the preservation of international order. And *Pax Britannica* can very legitimately claim to have been a force for progress, though not without its dark sides. In the post-war period, it was the same insight that brought America to give up isolationism and accept international responsibilities,and to lead the democratic nations in their opposition to the Communist power-bloc. But what does international leadership of a big power like the United States mean in the post-war world? The old military method of asserting leadership is impossible for two reasons. Firstly, in a nuclear age, in which two big power-blocs are equally armed to the limit and face a military stalemate, war has become the greater of any two political evils, and military power has become largely neutralized. Secondly, the sensitiveness of nations emerging into political freedom, after a fight against imperialist powers, make traditional imperialist methods of preserving peace suspect. And this suspicion is exploited by the Communists internationally. Therefore, America is faced with the problem of engineering primarily with economic power, psychological forces and public opinion to establish and exercise its leadership for the protection of democracy.

The Ugly American is a novel which faces several aspects of this complex problem. If the American power has a role to play in defence of democracy against Communism, how shall it play that role in the underdeveloped countries of the world? This is what the book asks and answers. The book discusses a great many American failures. The reason for the failures was that representatives of American power were psychological misfits and were unimaginative. Where the American power was exercised with imaginative appreciation of the human needs and fears of peoples as 'felt' by them, it achieved success. The diagnosis of the failure of American power and propaganda in underdeveloped countries is too simple and easy to be the whole truth. But the book raises crucial problems which American power has to face in its search for the path of leadership.

BOOK REVIEWS

A Catholic Puritan

Cyril Forster Garbett, Archbishop of York. Charles Smyth. (Hodder and Stoughton, 35s.)

Cyril Garbett will be remembered in Southwark as the most distinguished occupant of its See. His courage in the face of social evils and his readiness to champion righteous causes made a great impression. Within a few months of his enthronement the diocese knew that its leader had a wide conception of the Sovereignty of God. He believed that the whole of life had to be brought under its sway and was not content to confine himself to departmental issues. But if the conditions in South London encouraged this tendency, they did not create it. As an undergraduate at Oxford and as a priest in Portsea, Garbett had shown courage in the expression of his concern for the welfare of the poorer classes, and he did not hesitate to denounce the guilty. At Winchester and York his utterances were more discreet; he never lost his interest in the social implications of the Christian Gospel but he voiced his opinions in an idiom which rarely gave rise to controversy. And it is precisely this point which fascinates the critic.

To what extent should the Church in its efforts to achieve social righteousness be ahead of public opinion? Garbett had the knack of expressing cogently the views of the liberal minded, but not of the radicals. William Temple went further. But Garbett would probably have defended his position by contending that if the scouts are too far ahead of the main body they will be cut off. I do not mean that Garbett deliberately suppressed his opinions, but that he naturally identified himself with the main body, whereas Temple naturally found himself in the advance guard. And that is why the reactions to the two men were different. Garbett was trusted and applauded by 'the Establishment' in a way that Temple never was, but his appeal to those outside it was less obvious. It is significant, for instance, that when William Temple and Stafford Cripps jointly addressed large public meetings in the middle years of the war, Garbett was an unwilling partner. Again, when the country was confronted with the critical issue of nuclear armaments Garbett, speaking in the House of Lords, delighted and satisfied his peers.

And much the same impression is gained from reading his books. Garbett was basically a 'safe man'. He accepted the situation as it was, but, like a true liberal, pressed for ameliorations. He was not a radical and never really understood, as Temple did, the aspirations of those who favoured surgical operations rather than poultices. But this is said not to his detriment. The Church requires both a Temple and a Garbett, as each has his distinctive contribution to make. And if this distinction is remembered it will explain why Garbett's appeal was essentially to the middle classes and to the middle-aged, whereas Temple was the hero of the radicals and the younger generation. And the Church is the stronger for the witness of both.

As a churchman Cyril Garbett belonged to the High tradition. An Anglican to his finger-tips, he was nourished by the liturgy, discipline and piety of the Church of England. But he was not an Anglo-Catholic. At Portsea he emphasized the Sacramental doctrine, but was content to celebrate the Communion without lighted candles on the altar. At Southwark he was the *enfant terrible* of the episcopate because, while a well-meaning, lovable, but incompetent bishop failed to rule the diocese of London and tolerated the most exotic illegalities, Garbett insisted

that on the south bank of the Thames the Church of England should be the Church of England and not an aggregation of congregational chapels. In retrospect it may seem that he was too severe, but the position cannot be fairly estimated without taking into consideration the continuous embarrassment of the neighbouring diocese where each man did what was right in his own eyes and where ordination vows often seemed to count for little.

At Winchester and York the occasions for controversy were less and he was able to devote himself to more constructive policies. But again he was a reformer and not a radical. He could see the need for tinkering with the machinery but it is doubtful if he was aware of the extent to which the ground needed to be ploughed. Temple was under no illusions. He knew that a vast section of the nation was beyond the reach of the Church of England, and that its existing patterns were inadequate. Garbett was ready for the pattern to be modified, but no more. But this is not intended to be an unfavourable comparison. Both men had a contribution to make, and it would be foolish to describe the one as more important than the other. Suffice it to say that both were devoted sons of the English Church, were convinced of its Catholic inheritance, appreciated its Reformed character, and were reared in its piety. And it is difficult to believe that either could have developed as he did in any other tradition, even though both were devoted to the cause of Christian unity.

As a man Cyril Garbett is an interesting psychological study. Devout, disciplined and with an incredible capacity for work, he was shy, lonely and given to acute depressions. His intimates were his chaplains and he depended upon them much, perhaps too much. At heart he was a puritan and in spite of his Catholic piety he remained a puritan. If he could have overcome his puritanism he might have been a happier man. But, whatever his limitations, Garbett was first and foremost a holy man—a man whose integrity and devotion were such that those who came under his influence were induced to believe in God and goodness.

Charles Smyth has done a considerable service to the Church. That he should be responsible for an impressive biography is what one would have expected of an historian of such distinction; but he has done more—by his unusual sympathy and penetrating analysis he has succeeded in understanding, and making other people understand, a complex personality. Is it too much to hope that he may be persuaded to draw in words the portrait of a character even more enigmatic and brilliant, Herbert Hensley Henson, Bishop of Durham?

MERVYN SOUTHWARK

A Striving Soul

The Life of John Middleton Murry. F. A. Lea. (Methuen, 30s.)
Not as the Scribes. John Middleton Murry. (SCM Press, 18s.)

'I am very reluctant to change my idea,' Murry confessed in May 1937, 'but when I do change, I turn very thoroughly over to the new one.' He let nothing obstruct him in his search for a way of life that would satisfy him wholly, mind, heart and body. Mr Lea traces this quest of Murry's through the bewildering complexity of his life, through his personal relationships, through his work as a poet, journalist, literary critic and editor, through his political activities, his pacifism, his mystical experience and his religious faith. This last was for him the most difficult step of all. He wrote: 'I believe

I have struggled against the acceptance of Christianity as stubbornly and as advisedly as any man of my time. If I have surrendered, it has been because I had to surrender. I have fought, to the utmost of my integrity, every inch of the way.' Mr Lea's biography is a moving account of a human soul battering its way through grief and torment to happiness and a sense of some meaning in life. At the same time he has achieved a fine study of the bewilderment of the first half of this century. Murry and his contemporaries were caught Between Two Worlds (the title of his uncompleted autobiography) 'one dead, the other powerless to be born'. The life-pattern of society had changed at breakneck speed, deeply-held beliefs were challenged and shaken by the devastation of two world wars, new ideas were formed, some merely odd, some downright vicious. Murry is the representative figure of this chaotic age.

Not as the Scribes is a collection of Murry's addresses or lay sermons edited by Alec R. Vidler. Most of them were delivered on Sunday evenings to the farming community which he established to put into practice his social and religious beliefs. At these meetings for worship in Murry's house, the Epistle and Gospel for that Sunday from the Book of Common Prayer were read and as his addresses often took their text from these, they have been arranged in the order of the Sundays of the Christian year. The collection ends with two addresses on 'The Church and the Countryside' and 'On Church-going'.

Lodge Farm was originally his attempt to put pacifism into practice but later he deliberately renounced pacifism because it assumed that men were better than they are. The farm experiment, however, still continued in order 'to create a cell of good living in a society which has lost its purpose'. Continually in these addresses he mentions the problems they had to face, the down-to-earth struggle to get and keep a farm in good shape, the anxieties especially in the early days of the project, the clashes of temperament inevitable in a close-knit society, the discovery of the ordinariness and pettiness of people, and the menace of the crank with highfalutin' notions and not much real experience. Seeing that freedom was one of Murry's dearest concepts it is interesting that the problem of authority had to be settled and that in the early days of the farm he laid it down that the power of final decision must rest with him; the horseman who could not accept this departed. As he himself says, 'all the ideals are brought down to brass tacks here'.

The addresses describe an adventure in faith as well as in living. As Dr Vidler says in his introduction: 'Murry never spoke as one of the scribes, but always out of direct experience.' His faith began in the belief that if this world is to be saved from self-destruction, man must rediscover freedom and responsibility. As he worked this out in his own experience, especially in the farm community, through much suffering and disappointment he came to realize that 'the free society is a prodigious gamble on the possibility of a society of love', and that Christian democracy involves bearing one another's burdens. 'Without freedom, love is impossible; and without love, freedom is a nightmare.' And he saw the power of love enacted in the life and death of Jesus; Christ created God, as he so startlingly claims, because He revealed Him as a God of love. From this Murry built his faith until, apart from much that he still could not understand or accept, he was able to speak with conviction of what he knew and had proved for himself. In these sermons he explains in what sense he accepts orthodox Christian doctrines, such as

the Fall of Man, the Trinity and the Apostle's creed, and the address on church-going is a personal testimony to the enlarging, comforting and invigorating experience of Christian worship.

So Murry's 'strange and weary pilgrimage', as he himself described it, brought him within the frontiers of the Christian faith. He did not penetrate far enough to realize the Divine initiative or to know that God was prompting, guiding and meeting him in his search for truth. Murry thought only of finding, not of being found; even in his most exalted and mystical experiences he remains self-centred, or so it would seem. Glimpses of humour are rare and one wonders whether the less intellectual members of the community, especially if physically tired by the work of the farm, may not have dozed a little sometimes. Undoubtedly it was the personality of the man that held their interest, and for the same reason the addresses should certainly be read against the background of his life. They are then a moving testimony to the truth in so far as he in his experience had found it. This testimony may encourage others on the frontier to make the venture of faith and so be able to say as Professor Jung in a recently televised interview: 'I no longer need to believe, I know.'

B. WILLIAMS

Menace

The Enigma of Menace. Sir Victor Goddard. (Stevens, 12s. 6d.)

I am no longer surprised by the occasional naïveté of distinguished and even great men. I hope that the eccentricities of this book by Air-Marshal Goddard will not prevent its message getting through, for he has something important to say. To Christians such as Sir Victor who are not pacifists, force and the menace of force are an enigma; in one sense they are obvious evils, yet they can be the vehicle of good.

'Where the pacifist and the soldier part company is in the method of halting a course of evil. The soldier's method is to compel the restoration of conditions for the enjoyment of peace by absorbing through his own sacrifice the forces of evil. The soldier is everyman—every man and woman—who is fired into action by an ideal for which he is prepared to sacrifice all that he possesses. Anyone who is not prepared for that degree of sacrifice is not a soldier—not a *real* soldier.' (p. 55.)

A soldier's relation to his opponent is more complex than it looks. 'In a very real sense you have to love your enemy to overcome him. You have to accept him and suffer him . . . Montgomery, in a very certain way, *loved* Rommel; like a brother. He studied him in every way and sympathized with him in all his difficulties!' (p. 77.)

Sir Victor reaches conclusions that are almost diametrically opposed to the line of argument that I have put forward in FRONTIER. I hope that will induce those who disagree with me to read Sir Victor. He believes in a *pax atomica* and insists that the aim of policy must be to remove 'the causes of fear—worldly frustration' rather than 'the objects of fear—weapons'. We must accept that weapons 'are a means of restraining the animal in man from acting as such against his own kind'. (p. 99.) When this is accepted the road to disarmament will be found to lie through a reduction of 'the scales of menace', 'beginning preferably with a successive reduction of the numbers of men trained in the arts of fighting, and ultimately completing disarmament by the reduction of the weapons of maximum menace—not the other way round'.

J.W.L.

Oxford Catholics

The Life and Letters of K. E. Kirk. E. W. Kemp. (Hodder and Stoughton, 20s.)

Ronald Knox. Evelyn Waugh. (Chapman and Hall, 30s.)

What would Cardinal Newman have done if he had survived into the age of Belsen and Hiroshima? If he had been formally the Anglican he always in one sense was, his prolonged life would perhaps have been not vastly different from the one now recorded of Kenneth Kirk, Bishop of Oxford, 1937–54. And if his life had been prolonged in his devoted (if sometimes wistful) conversion to Rome, it is difficult to think of many points at which such a life would have diverged from the story now told of Monsignor Ronald Knox.

An astonishing number of characteristics were shared by these three priests and thinkers, Newman, Kirk and Knox—a deliberate divergence from the father (Newman's was a ne'er-do-well, Kirk's a Sheffield businessman Methodist for most of his life, Knox's the leader of the straitest sect of the Evangelicals); Oxford with its undergraduate glories and subsequent provision for solid work and influence; a somewhat extravagant maintenance of the doctrinal authority of the Catholic Church and its episcopate, coupled with an unpopular insistence on the mind finding its own way of assent to the actual doctrines, and with a marked tendency to disagreement with the actual bishops; a patriotism amounting to insularity; a distaste for the times—an attitude in which some ignorance of the creative forces of the modern world was mixed with a prophetic consciousness of some of its evils; a command of simple but evocative English, and the combination of a scholarly bent with a heart which was pastoral because it had suffered; an intricacy of spirit and an inner loneliness to the end, despite family and friends; a general impression of sadness counteracted by signs of deeper joy in the life of prayer.

If there is any truth in all this, how does one explain such shared characters? If one is deep in psychology, one may perhaps speak of a natural scepticism which in an age of open unbelief needed to receive grace and assurance through an authoritarian Church; and one may recall Pascal and others, including not a few saints. But your reviewer prefers a simple geographical explanation. Oxford really is able to mould the men who in the formative years of their youth open their whole spirits to her decaying charm!

Canon Kemp's biography does not have the psychological subtlety of Mr Waugh's, but many readers will be grateful for its assembly of the facts and of many passages from letters and articles. It is a careful piece of work. Readers may be surprised to learn that the Student Christian Movement enjoyed Kirk's services as a young man (he was a pioneer in its work among 'Oriental' students in London), and published his first two books. The excerpts here printed from one of them—*A Study of Silent Minds*—are impressive. Kirk's most important work was, however, done as an Oxford teacher, attempting to resuscitate Anglican moral theology; alas, the subject is now once again dead. Perhaps Kirk's intellectual grasp weakened when he became a bishop. Unlike Knox, he was not stirred to the depths by the atomic bomb. It is also odd that a theologian so learned in Christian history should have lent his name to the Anglo-Catholic reconstruction of the origins of episcopacy—an enterprise lamented by those students of the subject who do not share the Anglo-Catholic doctrinal pre-

suppositions, and one which for a time poisoned people's minds against the Church of South India. Quite rightly, the bulk of this biography is devoted to Kirk's work as Bishop of Oxford. He was something of a dictator, but in many ways was ideal for his diocese. (The size of this diocese made his task fantastic, of course.) He fought gallantly against the centralization of the Church of England. All in all, this was a great man; no one but an ultimately great man could have written the book *The Vision of God.*

The word 'greatness' is not easily associated with the modest, gentle spirit of Ronald Knox. As a writer he was at his most brilliant when parodying. He was not a 'go-getter' in any sense; he spurned the prizes of the Church of England, for years he was content to teach Latin to Roman Catholic ordinands for his living, his chaplaincy at Oxford—the striking honesty of this biography is specially strong here—was not exactly dynamic, he took the English aristocracy too seriously (like Mr Waugh!), he had unhappy dealings with his ignorant hierarchy over his official translations, and allowed the bishops to cheat him out of anything like proper payment for his major work, the translation of the Vulgate. (To a non-RC, the very willingness to translate from the Vulgate's Latin, and not from the Hebrew and Greek, must itself seem rather supine.) But how dare one sit in judgment—specially as Knox was so critical of himself, and so determined to be loyal to the Church of his conversion? At his best as an essayist or translator, Knox was pure alpha; and that was often —what hours of delight he has given! As a friend, he aroused the love and gratitude of many intelligent lay people, including Mr Waugh, who has now honoured his memory worthily.

Oxford will, no doubt, have a lot to answer for on Judgment Day, but the lives of Kenneth Kirk and Ronald Knox will be evidence that an Oxford religion was in the middle of the twentieth century still capable of inspiring major Englishmen.

DAVID L. EDWARDS

Liberty and Authority

The Prophet Unarmed, Trotsky 1921–9. Isaac Deutscher. (OUP, 38s.)

Mr Deutscher has surpassed himself in this latest volume of his biography of Trotsky. To say that the book is worthy of its theme is high praise. The story of communism is a tragedy and Trotsky is the perfect tragic hero. Brave, of towering intellect, and animated by noble ideals, he was undone by the faults in his character and the gaps in his philosophy. He reached a rare height of achievement only to see his work perverted by enemies who had been friends.

Mr Deutscher does not idealize Trotsky. He lets one see both his genius and his mistakes. By the end of the Civil War the Russian Revolution was in an *impasse*, for the general destruction had brought industry almost to a standstill and scattered the working class. But a communist party without a working class to back it did not make sense, the working class could not be reconstituted quickly and in the meantime the Party, or rather its Old Guard, found themselves ruling in the place of a class that did not exist. So 'the Bolshevik felt alienated from his own work—the revolution. His own state and his own party towered high above him. They appeared to have a mind and a will of their own which bore little relation to his mind and his will. . . . Society as a whole had lost all transparency. No social class was free to express its will. The will of any class was therefore unknown. The rulers and the political theorists had to

guess it, only to be more and more often taught by events that they had guessed it wrongly. . . . Both the ruling group and the opposition moved in the dark, fighting against real dangers and against apparitions, and chasing one another and one another's shadows. They ceased to see one another as they were and saw each other as mysterious social entities with hidden and sinister potentialities which had to be deciphered and rendered harmless.' (p. 313.)

After a few years of this both sets of opponents seemed to be in the grip of fate. A Stalinist trying to show a Trotskyist that the opposition was pernicious said: 'What does this lead to? You know the history of the French Revolution—and to what this led; to arrests and to the guillotine.' 'Is it your intention to guillotine us?' was the answer. The Stalinist replied: 'Don't you think that Robespierre was sorry for Danton when he sent him to the guillotine? And then Robespierre had to go himself. . . . Do you think he was not sorry? Indeed he was, yet he had to do it.' Mr Deutscher adds: 'Judges and defendants alike saw the giant and bloody blade above their heads; but as if gripped by fatality they were unable to avert what was coming; and each, hesitantly, or even tremblingly, went on doing what he had to do to hasten its descent.' (p. 342.)

The whole book is a study in liberty and authority. It is strange for anyone who has read church history to read these discussions of whether one may remain within the Party and yet question its teaching or its authority in the practical sphere, whether one may dissent openly, privately, or not at all, and whether it is possible to have schism within the Party. The great unsolved question was how one could have freedom within the Party without giving freedom to those without it. The problem remains unsolved and that is why the present rulers of the Soviet Union still prevent discussion about these problems of the 'twenties. Trotsky was not more right than his opponents but his story raises unanswered questions. I should like to know the candid opinions of some young Russian historians about this book. J.W.L.

Shorter Notices

The Humbler Creation. Pamela Hansford Johnson. (Macmillan, 16s.)

This is a novel about a parson in an ex-fashionable part of London—about his congregation, the inmates of his vicarage, his marriage. His marriage is on the rocks, and a love affair compensates. The incidents are piled on a bit too thickly for real life, and so are the human weaknesses; a pity, for there is a theme here which would have made a great realistic novel. But the book is highly readable, and its abiding impact is a creative one, full of compassion and of admiration for the Christian virtues to be found in this unglamorous setting. Definitely recommended.

DAVID L. EDWARDS

Who is This? Mary Crawford. (Faith Press, 10s. 6d.)

Another 'Bible Told to the Children'? No. Mary Crawford (Mrs E. M. Nicholson) starting from the point of view of a sceptical agnostic, has for some years been trying to establish to her own satisfaction just what the Gospels tell us about the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus. This book is the product of this search. Beneath its artless surface there is concealed a story of brave and honest spiritual struggle. That is one reason why this unpretentious retelling of familiar stories holds its readers and sends them to their Bibles every five minutes to find out just what the Gospels do say. J.W.L.

New Vocations

Part-Time Priests: A Discussion. Edited by Robin Denniston. (Skeffington. 16s.)

It was only a matter of time before a book appeared on the question of a part-time ministry in the Church of England, through the ordination of men in their secular employment. The question is being raised from rather different interests, but the most pressing one is concerned with the general shortage of clergy and its unbalanced age-structure.

Unfortunately this is not a very good book. It has some twenty short contributions which make it altogether scrappy. It claims to be a *discussion* which assuredly it is not. And this is a pity since only the closest discussion on the theological, sociological and strategical aspects of the proposal, and the weighing of the different interests against one another, could have sharpened the real questions that ought to be faced before we leap at a 'supplementary ministry'.

The contributions vary greatly in quality; there are several distinguished ones and some very poor ones, and although most advocate the proposal, there is a general confusion about its essential purpose. What in fact is it we are really seeking? Is it more priests to man churches than the full-time ministry can provide? Militants set out in the secular areas where priests do not enter? The 'realization of the sacred within the secular'? 'Infiltration into professions and trade unions'? An answer to the massive growth of Roman orders and Pentecostal zealots? 'More spiritual force, that as a layman one cannot hope to possess'? Priest-workmen or workman-priests? All these arguments tumble out of the pages, with the legal pros and cons, and precedents from Paul the tentmaker, Spiridion Bishop of Trimithuntis who kept sheep when Nicaea was sitting, to modern Hong Kong and Paris.

What then should we say to the idea? Much more than a review can contain surely. But we must say that what is theologically permissible, what was inevitable in the pre-Constantine Church, what may be good sense in the vast areas of Canada, the small Church in South India or the intractable Red Belt of Paris, may not necessarily be desirable in Britain—at this present time. And for reasons that are partly theological and partly sociological, concerned with the nature of the Church-community relationships in this country, and the character of the relationship between the Church as an institution and other institutions of society. This is not to adopt a reactionary position or to rule out a few careful experiments, but to insist that there are given facts about the relationship of Church and society in England to which we must be sensitive and which cannot be ignored if we are to act with wisdom.

For example, have the proposers considered and weighed the possible consequences of ordaining some headmasters of provided schools (and it should be noted that many of our lay-readers are schoolmasters, as eight of the thirteen part-time ministers in Hong Kong)? Have they considered the possible consequences for the day to day life of an engineering shop where the manager who has to run it is in orders? Or the poor foreman if it is he? Or the complications certain to follow the ordination of an engineer involved in the tensions of an A.E.U. District Committee? Of course these are selected illustrations, but they are real ones indeed. Or do we visualize the selection of men only from uncontroversial areas of the national life? This is not a question of legality—it is a sociological

matter, a matter of the sensitive 'feel' of the Church for her appropriate role in relation to the secular institutions of society.

The other side of this coin is the laity. We should recognize that the proposal can obscure the true role of the laity in the world. There are some unfortunate passages of the book which suggest that ordination would increase spiritual status, strengthen men for their secular witness and manifest the sacred within the secular. If this is so it is a tragic and a dangerous thing to admit, for the Church in the world is the laity dispersed into their secular callings—a truth all too late discovered, and on which we must never go back. We must beware of obscuring it. We must beware of 'debasing' the laity. And, most important, in those areas where skilful mission and training have disclosed and produced a new significant laity, we must beware of cutting off the heads of the very examples and case-studies we so desperately need to multiply. For if it is true that there is a shortage of ministers, it is equally apparent to those with eyes to see that the priority of mission requires an active, catalytic laity in the secular institutions of society. Where such exist, we should not obscure their genuine lay status.

But there remains the practical problem that we need some more clergy. The Church is aware of it, and should not adopt panic measures. In fact the statement in the first essay that 'it looks as though by 1961 something like half the existing whole-time ministry will be 65 if not more than that', is, we respectfully submit, statistically incorrect. If the intake of deacons is maintained, and it is happily a growing figure, we have already reached the low level and the decade from 1961 should see a steadily increasing number of clergy with a falling average age, and we must ensure that this happens. But if we need some more men to help in the Church and the parish would we not be wiser to admit this as the simple and adequate reason for ordaining some men in their jobs, and not obscure the issue by grandiose and questionable claims? The question will arise who they should be. In fact, whether it is what is desired or not, among the first claimants would be lay-readers. We might seek more men retired early, and we have some fine examples of such men bringing maturity and weight into the ministry. We might also press forward with reunion discussions. And, most important, we should try to be more relevant to our contemporary world—the surest way to new vocations for the right and best reasons, the most certain thing that God would have us learn from our predicament.

E. R. WICKHAM

BOOKS RECEIVED

Missionary Church in East and West. Ed. by C. C. West and David M. Paton. (SCM, 9s. 6d.)
Creative Tension. Stephen Neill. (Edinburgh House Press, 10s. 6d.)
The Church and the Nations. Adrian Hastings. (Sheed & Ward, 21s.)
Part Time Priests. Robin Denniston. (Skeffington, 16s.)
Mackenzie's Grave. Owen Chadwick. (Hodder & Stoughton, 25s.)
Religion, Science and Mental Health. (N.Y. University Press, $3.)
The Ethical Idealism of Matthew Arnold. William Robbins. (Heinemann, 25s.)
All Women of the World. Edith Deen. (Independent Press, 15s.)
The Message of Job. James Stewart. (Independent Press, 12s. 6d.)
The Plain Man Looks at Himself. William Purcell. (Collins, 12s. 6d.)
Humanism and Moral Theory. R. Osborn. (Allen & Unwin, 18s.)
Social Principles and the Democratic State. S. I. Benn and R. S. Peters. (Allen & Unwin, 32s.)
Jesus and His Story. Ethelbert Stauffer. (SCM, 12s. 6d.)
Jesus Christ and Mythology. Rudolf Bultmann. (SCM, 6s.)
The Ladder of Temptations. Harold Blais. (Longmans, 7s. 6d.)
The Religious Foundations of Internationalism. Norman Bentwich. (Allen & Unwin, 21s.)
The Movement of World Revolution. Christopher Dawson. (Sheed and Ward, 13s. 6d.)
Approaches to Christian Unity. C. J. Dumont, O.P. (Darton, Longman & Todd, 25s.)
Why Christ. The Abbot of Downside. (Darton, Longman & Todd, 10s. 6d.)
I Believe. G. W. H. Lampe. (Skeffington, 18s.)

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* *A Great Gospel for a Great Day.* The William Ainslie Memorial Lecture 1959 delivered in St Martin-in-the-Fields by David L. Edwards. SCM. Some reflections on the task of Christian apologists to-day
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